

## 2008 Behavior, Energy and Climate Change Conference Roundtable Abstract

### 20. How Can Medical Models Be Applied as a Means of Breaking Our Addiction to Energy?

Moderator: Michael Williams, PRC International

**Abstract:** The purpose of this round table is to expand the discussion of how and why consumers make energy choices from currently held approaches to a model shown to be efficacious in medicine. The three core approaches to conservation/energy efficiency are: pricing, programs, and knowledge. Pricing increases energy efficiency through more effective pricing of energy or alternatives. Programs employ social programs to encourage the adoption of energy efficiency. Knowledge takes the form of advertising, or information. The common theme in these programs is the assumption that the consumer is seeking to maximize the utility of their energy dollar.

The approach that is being introduced here presupposes that the consumer can only change their behavior with great difficulty. It assumes that energy consumption, is like an addiction – in this case similar to a process addiction. Such a model would lead to very different implementation approaches and expectations of program success than strictly economic models. This discussion will highlight what has been learned in medicine about dealing with addictive behaviors.

The panel that will provide the background and lead this round table discussion will include experts in both energy as well as health behavior and modeling including: Richard D. Fantozzi, M.D., President of the Medical Board of California, Gene Rodriques, J.D. (invited), Director, Division of Energy Efficiency, Southern California Edison, Betsy White Williams, Ph.D., M.P.H., Associate Professor, Departments of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Rush University Medical School, Ziyad Awad, Ph.D., Awad & Awad Consulting