



# AUSTRALIAN INJURY PREVENTION NETWORK

## INJURY INCIDENCE

Vol 4. No 2. June 2000

### Dear Readers

The power of people can never be underestimated as has been shown by Victoria's Safe Communities. Only four short years ago Latrobe and Hume WHO community safety programs took the first steps towards instituting what is now known as Community Safety Week.

Participation in Victoria's Community Safety Week has grown from 14 to over 200 organizations and community groups, involving both government and non-government agencies. This number can be doubled if you consider the actual number of community safety activities that take place across the state in both metropolitan and rural Victoria.

CSW is now a statewide promotion, achieved largely by the enormous good will and a willingness to work together. The safe communities theme of "live, work, and play safe" has become a celebration for all those who are turning the tide on the unacceptable cost of injury across the community.

As practitioners of injury prevention it is encouraging to be reminded of the social benefits of injury prevention. So often we argue the economic rationale, the dollar savings of reduced mortality and reduced morbidity, as we scramble to survive. It is easy to lose sight of the social contribution that injury prevention makes to the quality of our lifestyle, that injury prevention is a social investment, as well as a health savings.

40 kph residential speed limits have been a controversial issue for South Australia. At the heart of the debate has been the significant contribution that 40 kph makes to pedestrian safety. But, it would be prejudicial to ignore the important role that improving local amenity and developing a sense of community played in achieving the 40 kph residential speed limit areas. Investing in safety has been the catalyst for positively influencing the broader social health of the community and vice versa.

Acknowledging injury prevention as an *investment*, in the broadest possible context, is probably my personal wish list for the year 2000.

*Liz (and Fran)*

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##### Queensland

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### Aussie Reps

Two Australians have been elected to the new committee of the International Society for Child and Adolescent Injury Prevention (ISCAIP). Ian Scott has been re-elected secretary and Jan Shield joins the committee as the Australasian regional representative.



### Safe Communities News

"The beautiful town of Denmark in the south west corner of Western Australia was accredited as a World Health Organisation 'Safe Community' network member in early April 2000 - this demonstration site for community safety promotion is number 49 in our global community

Melbourne City became the first state capital in the southern hemisphere and community number 50.

Of the total of 51 accredited WHO Safe Communities : 12 are Australian, two in NZ, with two of the seven affiliate support centres being in Australia - and one in NZ.....the interest and enthusiasm for this model of injury prevention/safety promotion continues with many aspirants for

membership of the WHO Safe Community Network. NSW has at least 3, Victoria 3 and Qld 2.

This event also saw an International Symposium focused on Safety in Major Urban Environments - see the WHO Collaborating Centre website for a report <http://www.ki.se/phs/wcc-csp> or contact Anne Malloch, City Safety Officer at Melbourne City Victoria 03 9658 9783 or fax 03 9650 1112 or Email [anmal@melbourne.vic.gov.au](mailto:anmal@melbourne.vic.gov.au)

**Community Safety Week** will be celebrated in Victoria during September 3-9, 2000. This annual event has seen increasing community activity highlighting safety promotion/violence and injury prevention.

Have a look at websites

<http://www.general.monash.edu.au/muar/c/vscn/safeweek.htm>

Checkout the 1999 Evaluation - a downloadable PDF.....

Contact Carmen Lee, Project Officer for the Victorian Safe Communities Network Ph 03 9905 1907 or e mail [carmen.lee@general.monash.edu.au](mailto:carmen.lee@general.monash.edu.au)

Caroline Jackson has been appointed Community Safety Week Coordinator (located with Department of Justice in Victoria) contact her on Ph 03 9651 6946 or email [caroline.jackson@justice.vic.gov.au](mailto:caroline.jackson@justice.vic.gov.au) for more.

Henk Harberts  
Chair, VSCN and Community Safety Planner  
Latrobe City, Victoria

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# Injury -- A major focus at the new Institute for International Health (NSW)



Established in 1999, the Institute for International Health is a joint venture of the University of Sydney Faculty of Medicine and Sydney's Royal North Shore Hospital. The main aim of the Institute is to conduct an international program of health research and development, the objectives of which are to facilitate the prevention of premature death, serious ill-health and disability from common causes of three major health problems:

- Heart and vascular diseases
- Injury
- Neuropsychiatric conditions.

The main aim of the injury research program is to address the growing burden of injury worldwide, through the:

- Discovery of modifiable causes of injury
- Identification of effective, practicable strategies for prevention and treatment
- Formulation and implementation of research-based policy and practice in injury.

The injury research program comprises preventive, epidemiological and clinical studies, and involves collaboration with developed countries, including those of Australasia, North America and Europe, and the developing and newly industrialised countries, including those in the Asia Pacific region, India and South America.

Under the direction of Prof. Robyn Norton, Ramsay Health Care Chair of Injury Prevention, the multi-disciplinary team of staff are developing projects in 4 main areas of injury research. The project areas and some of these projects are outlined below:

## 1. Motor- vehicle related injuries

- a project aimed at investigating the causes and consequences of motor vehicle-related injuries in China
- a cohort study involving 20,000 young drivers, aimed at investigating the role of risk perception and risk-taking behaviours; driver education, training and experience; and ethnic/cultural factors in young driver injuries
- a program of research focusing on motorcycle safety, including a series of systematic reviews ( in collaboration with the Cochrane Injuries Review) to identify known effective interventions, and subsequent development, implementation and evaluation of potentially effective intervention strategies.

## 2. Musculoskeletal injuries

- a multi-centre, randomised controlled trial to examine the effectiveness of peri-operative non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs in reducing long-term pain and disability following hip replacement
- Translation of Research into Practice (TRIP) - a qualitative research study aimed at assessing the acceptability and potential feasibility of a new approach to the dissemination of falls prevention information

## 3. Violence (projects under development)

## 4. Trauma care

- a multi-centre, randomised controlled trial aimed at examining the effects of different fluid resuscitation regimens on mortality in intensive care patients.

For more information about our research, please contact the Injury Program Coordinator, Aleksandra Natora on 02 9926 6434 or Fax 02 9926 6830 or see our website:  
<http://www.iih.usyd.edu.au>



## Youth Injury Prevention Coordinated by Spinesafe

The first part of 2000 has been a very exciting time for Spinesafe, as it has seen Youthsafe develop rapidly from concept to reality. Youthsafe Forum 2 was held on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April and was attended by over 60 people working in injury prevention and related fields. The forum was a valuable opportunity for Youthsafe to receive feedback and direction from the injury prevention community. Planning is currently under way for Youthsafe Forum 3, which will be held on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2000. Some current Youthsafe projects include:

- Road safety project targeting young males funded by the RTA
- Co-ordination of the Ryde Safe Communities Sport Safety Project, which aims to promote positive participation in community sport in Ryde by raising the standard of sport safety.
- Website development including a data base of projects and contacts in youth injury prevention
- Development of policies for youth involvement, advocacy, communication and multicultural/ indigenous young people.
- Consultation with trade unions and industry with a view to developing workplace safety programs.

## Latest Research...

In December 1999 Spinesafe commissioned Jane Elkington & Associates to undertake a literature review of existing educational strategies that effectively promote safety and reduce injuries to young people (15-24 years).

The principal questions that this review addressed were:

- What are the proven or promising educational and other approaches for promoting safety and reducing injuries among young people?
- How do educational approaches best fit within a comprehensive injury prevention model for this age group?
- What is the evidence regarding school-based programs in terms of the elements required to be maximally effective?

Copies of the report are available in either brief or full report format from Spinesafe on 02 9808 9202

Brief Report - 14 pages - Free of charge (available by email only). Full Report- 79 pages - \$15 including postage

## The Youthsafe Team

The Youthsafe Team now consists of three full time members. Susan Fitzgerald, Youthsafe Co-ordinator, Judith Molloy and Elizabeth Develin, Youthsafe Project Officers. For more information:-

Phone 02 9808 9202  
Fax 02 9809 6521



IIH Injury Research Team: L to R: Robyn Norton, Ting-Rui Guan, Lawrence Lam, Marlene Fransen, Mark Woodward and Aleksandra Natora (absent Rebecca Ivers).

## The Cost of Falls (NSW)

The Injury Policy Unit of New South Wales Health recently commissioned a study to predict the effect on the costs of fall related injury, that is expected to be caused by the expected demographic shift in the next fifty years. We asked the question: If the rates, costs and management practices of fall related injury does not change in NSW during the next 50 years, what is the impact of the demographic change alone on health care and other costs? The paper, developed by Jerry Moller of new Directions in Health and Safety, was reviewed by Centre for Health Economics Research and Evaluation (CHERE). The review verified the predictions concerning the impact on health care costs made by the paper.

The impact of demographic changes on resources required to treat falls among older persons in NSW is significant. In the first 50 years of the millennium, resources required to manage fall related injuries can be expected to double, if there is no change in the rate, severity or treatment patterns. It is important to note that none of these predictions include fall-related injury occurring as adverse events in inpatient care. As it is unlikely that the rates of fall related hospitalisations would remain constant during that period, it is likely

that this paper will represent an underprojection.

The projected total additional number of bed days required equates to 800 additional hospital beds (four two hundred bed hospitals), and will need 1200 additional nursing home places. The major increase in demand in both these environments will come from women aged 75 years or more.

The major objective of any prevention initiative must be to hold the prevalence of fall related admissions in the future to current levels. Preventing fall injury in the community and in hospitals and nursing homes requires the active participation and support of a broad range of community health, health promotion and patient management services. It also requires support from a number of wider disciplinary groups such as local government, the shopping centre industry etc. The Injury Policy Unit will prepare a scoping paper for the development of a NSW Health Policy on fall prevention. Any policy that might emerge from this process will need to garner support from across NSW Health services.

Copies of paper and reviews available from the IPPU 02 93919679  
[palba@doh.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:palba@doh.health.nsw.gov.au)



## Shooting tales

### Shooters reject child ban at hunts

Hunters yesterday rejected a State Opposition call for children to be banned from duck hunts after a six year old drowned with two duck hunters in a Victorian lake on Saturday. Keith Tidswell of the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia, said duck hunting had been "incidental" to the tragedy near Castlemaine. Basically, this was a boating tragedy," he said.

- 'The Age' (Melbourne), 21 March 2000

### Shooting accidents claim two lives

"A 40-year-old man has died after being accidentally shot while spotlight shooting on a property at Dimboola on Saturday night. Two adults and two youths were spotlighting at Old Racecourse Road about 9pm when the accident occurred,

a police spokeswoman said. In north-west New South Wales a man in his 40s died yesterday after he accidentally shot himself during a pig-shooting trip."

- 'The Age' (Melbourne), 24 April 2000

### High tech gun locks

Child deaths from shootings in the US have prompted exploration of technology interventions to lock guns.

Smith and Wesson has developed a prototype handgun that won't let you insert a magazine into the gun unless your thumbprint matches.

Colt and Smart:Link are exploring rings or bracelets that emit a coded radio signal. The gun will only fire if the signal is within a certain range, (but of course the jewellery could be stolen along with the gun.)

[www.smith-wesson.com](http://www.smith-wesson.com)  
[www.colt.com](http://www.colt.com) [www.smartlinks.net](http://www.smartlinks.net)

- Rosanne Bersten, 'The Age' (Melbourne), April 2000

Provided by Jan Shield

## HIP PROTECTOR STUDY Work in progress (WA)

The overall aims of this project are to:

- Examine the epidemiology of falls in nursing home residents.
- Examine the role of hip protectors in preventing hip fractures of these residents, particularly the levels of compliance in the wearing of hip protectors.
- Establish a surveillance system in the participating nursing homes in order to measure compliance of the nursing staff.

The effectiveness of external hip protectors used by nursing home residents is dependent on a range of issues. Compliance is a significant issue that requires further research in order to facilitate the implementation of the external hip protector in the nursing home effectively, and will be examined in the second phase of this project. Non-compliance may be due to a number of causes including; resident selection methods, lack of education/training (about the external hip protectors), resource availability, resident discomfort, staff and residents attitudes, laundering practices, incompatibility with resident's health, and staff schedules. If the efficacy of external hip protectors among this population can be determined, it will guide future use with implications for injury prevention.

### Project Outcomes

*Identify baseline fall rates in selected nursing homes and establish a surveillance system*

A study on the epidemiology of falls in nursing home residents was completed in September 1999. The primary goal of this study (Phase 1) was to determine the characteristics of fallers in nursing homes.

*Monitor changes in the rate of falls during the trial period*

In this phase of this project, hip protectors will be provided to residents in selected nursing homes and the rate of falls will be monitored along with the level of compliance of the nursing staff. A surveillance system will be implemented in order to measure the rate of compliance and will be used in conjunction with the nursing home incident report forms to determine the rate of falls and the levels of compliance.

*Establish an injury surveillance system within selected nursing homes*

The nursing homes included in Phase 2 of the study have already established an injury surveillance system that we will use to measure hip fractures and injuries among the residents.

*Pilot the potential effect on hip fracture rates when hip protectors are available for residents at risk of falling*

Data on falls and hip fractures and levels of compliance will be collected during the implementation of the hip protectors in the selected nursing homes.

The completion date for the project is August 2000. The final results will be presented at the upcoming National conference in November.

Gina Arena MA, Project Officer  
Hip Protector Study, Phone 08 9420 7212  
Email [iccwa@iccwa.org.au](mailto:iccwa@iccwa.org.au)



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**Queensland Government  
establishes HEALTH  
PROMOTION QUEENSLAND -  
the new Health Promotion  
Council**

Health Promotion Queensland (HPQ) has been established to provide expert advice to the Minister regarding the implementation of health promotion programs, applied research and other associated strategies to address the health needs of Queenslanders.

Membership of HPQ represents the tertiary, community, non-government and consumer sectors. In 1999-2000, Health Promotion Queensland has been allocated \$900,000 to fund 2 to 4 large-scale grants, ranging from \$225,000 to \$450,000 depending on the scope of the project.

The priorities for the first year of operation are the health of older people and men. HPQ has focused on the evidence linking multi-strategy health promotion interventions (involving nutrition, physical activity, alcohol reduction and reduction of overweight and obesity) with decreases in relative risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer (particularly colorectal cancer) and diabetes. HPQ has related this evidence to the priority population groups of older people, men and the indigenous population to provide a focus for the grants for 1999-2000.

In considering the evidence, HPQ has reviewed the Queensland Health, Health Outcome Plans for Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes, the National Diabetes Plan, and the National Health Priority Areas Plan. Consultation also occurred with the Queensland Public Health Forum and the NSW Cancer Council.

Fostering and encouraging collaboration between business, the non-government agencies, community and industry sectors is one of the main priorities for *Health Promotion Queensland*. As a result, HPQ will seek interest from Consortia with the capacity to address the selection criteria outlined on the tender documents.

In 2000-01, falls prevention in older persons has been identified as area of high importance. A multi strategy, multi agency project will be developed following an targeted tendering process in July 2000.

For further information contact  
Secretariat Health Promotion Queensland  
Jeff Allen, Public Health Services,  
Ph: 07 323 41613  
Fax: 07 322 00708

## Safe as Houses? (Qld)

Injured yourself at home recently? Statistics show you are not alone. A massive 45% of all injuries occur in the home, with the main causes being falls, burns, poisonings, and near drownings.

An initiative of Queensland Health to reduce the burden of residential injuries is receiving overwhelming support from government and non-government groups and organisations. As a result of this support, a multi-sectoral working party has been formed. Agencies represented include Queensland Housing, Brisbane City Council, Queensland Ambulance Service, Public Health Services, Kidsafe Queensland, and the Tenant's Union of Queensland.

Through this network, the initiatives of individual organisations can be supported, as well as those collectively agreed upon by the taskforce. It is a collaborative effort to reduce residential injuries through multiple strategies, including policy change.

While the group looks at big picture issues such as housing design, they also focus on many other simple and cheap measures that property owners can do to make their homes safer. These include child-resistance locks, and

reinforced railings in bathrooms to prevent falls.

Some examples of current initiatives being explored by the group include:

- Making electrical inspections mandatory on sale of residences
- Targeting the home handyman, to reduce self installation of electrical items
- Development of a minimum data set for residential injury
- Targeting people of non-English speaking background, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in these areas.

Queensland Health is endeavouring to raise awareness of residential injury with the publication of the "Child Home Safety Construction Guidelines". The booklet gives room by room descriptions of safety precautions that should be considered to reduce injury in the home for people of all ages. These range from smoke alarms, to stove guards, to non-slip floors.

For further information, contact Ryan Williams (Project Officer, West Moreton Public Health Unit) on 07 3818 5001 or Email: [ryan\\_williams@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:ryan_williams@health.qld.gov.au)

### Injury Incidence Deadline for articles

**18 August 2000  
17 November 2000**

**Please submit your articles or  
news snippets to :-**

**Fran McFadzen, The Editor,  
Phone: 07 4920 6980**

**Fax: 07 4920 6865**

**Email: [mcfadzef@rocknet.net.au](mailto:mcfadzef@rocknet.net.au)**

**AIPN is a professional  
organisation bringing  
together all Australians and  
New Zealanders concerned  
with injury issues. Please feel  
free to contact us for more  
information.**

AIPN undertakes to collate information from contributors, and has not been responsible for the research reported in this newsletter

## AIPN Executive Committee

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