



## COMMUNIQUE

### 16-17 MARCH 2003 MEETING

The 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Strategic Injury Prevention Partnership was held in Perth on 16-17 March 2003. Members attending the meeting were Rod McClure (Chair), James Harrison (AIHW), Michael Callan and Kerry Smith (Commonwealth & SIPP Secretariat), Richard Franklin (AIPN), Pam Albany (NSW), Paul Vardon for Michael Tilse (Queensland), Nicole Bennett (WA), Ron Somers (SA), Nicola Rabot (Victoria), Stan Bordeaux (TAS) and Tarun Weeramanthri (NT). Also in attendance were Sandy Brinsdon (Ministry of Health, NZ), Margaret Thomas (Victoria), Bec Paddick and Belinda Brandon (Commonwealth) and Linda Parsons and Hazel Hopkins (WA).

Several invited guests attended for brief periods. These were members of the Australian Injury Prevention Research Institutions of Australasia, Kerry Mulvenna (NCIS), Sophie Pointer (NISU) and Jerry Moller (New Directions in Health and Safety).

Apologies were received from Anna Perkins (ACT), John Wunsch (Consumer Affairs), John Scott (Co-Chair).

#### Updates from jurisdictions

Members provided updates on their recent work.

##### Western Australia:

Nicole Bennett reported that her unit is working with the Princess Margaret Hospital Emergency Department to collect data on paediatric injuries. This is the only paediatric hospital in Perth. She also reported that her unit is leading the complementary business planning in consultation with the Area Health Service-Population Health units, injury prevention non-government organisations and sections of the Department of Health including Office of Aboriginal Health and the Office of Rehabilitation and Aged Care. The injury prevention health sector has an increased number of partnerships that are increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of injury prevention activity in WA. An independent consultation on the development of the WA Water Safety Plan has raised several issues of concern which will need to be addressed regarding specific roles of stakeholders.

##### Tasmania:

Stan Bordeaux reported that his State relies on NGOs to implement a lot of the injury prevention work. Issues at the national level of Kidsafe have therefore interrupted the work of the Tasmanian office of Kidsafe. Stan reported that the Falls Demonstration project is progressing well and is based on a system change approach. The Emergency Department of the Royal Hobart Hospital is trialing an early identification of non-admitted fallers and installing a referral system to their GPs for further intervention and referral as required. A





second component of the project, having GPs use EPC to identify high risk fallers is currently having limited success, but the team is working closely with the Divisions of GP to facilitate this important project.

#### South Australia:

Ron Somers reported that his Unit has been working on a number of issues of interest to SIPP members. These included the proposed National Poisoning Prevention project with the Commonwealth and TGA; and the expansion of the SA Trauma Registry to improve its clinical quality. Ron's Unit also recently identified a dangerous cot and has had this banned under the Trade Practices Act. Ron also raised a number of issues of concern that his Unit was investigating:

- dementia and driving – this is a big issue as the current test doesn't include a cognitive measure;
- the issue of booster seats for toddlers being made mandatory;
- above ground pools are not covered by the Building Code;
- universal leashing for dogs in public places;
- evaluation of the law requiring helmet use by skaters and skateboarders on public roads; and
- cheap refillable lighters do not require child resistant mechanisms.

#### Commonwealth:

Michael Callan reported that the National Falls Prevention in Older People Initiative had been reunited with the Injury team. This has created the opportunity for several new staff and a recruitment process was currently underway. The Injury team is linking with other sections and teams within the Drug Strategy Branch to investigate opportunities for joint projects.

#### New South Wales:

Pam Albany reported that a considerable budget has been promised for the rollout of the NSW policy for falls prevention in older people. Pam also reported that the Aboriginal Health Partnership has signed off on the NSW Aboriginal Safety Promotion Strategy. This strategy can now be implemented, with funding sources to follow. Pam reported that she has been involved in developing a national Safety Communities Foundation, although progress has been slow. The NSW Fire Brigades are interested in expanding their community safety role in this area. The contract with the Injury Risk Management Centre of NSW has been finalised. This group will provide research and policy advice to the NSW government on injury risk management.

#### Queensland:

Paul Vardon (for Michael Tilse) reported that in response to the recent release of a coroner's report on the drowning death of a child, the Department of Local Government and Planning has surveyed all local governments on pool fencing compliance. Since then, three local Governments have hired staff to perform regular compliance checks and are trialing pool inspection guidelines. Given renewed interest, the development of a Queensland Water Safety Plan is being progressed and is hoped will be endorsed by key stakeholders in the near future. The Statewide Action Plan: Falls Prevention in Older People 2002-2006 has been





released and is being implemented across the State. It will provide a forum for activity across settings and across districts. Injury Prevention has been identified as an area which needs more investment in the recent Smart State: Health 2020 document. Queensland Health is actively participating in a number of key initiatives in partnership with other State Government Departments (Emergency Services and Housing) including safe housing and injury prevention. Given limited resources and incentives, injury surveillance data collection in Emergency Departments remains an ongoing issue. Given the organisational nature of community health in Queensland, working effectively at a statewide level is problematic.

#### Victoria:

Nicola Rabot reported that Community Safety Month had gone very well with a large injury prevention focus and activities at various levels. The Safe Start program for child injury prevention is now being run at three demo sites. This project engages community level participation in injury prevention. The Victorian Child Injury Prevention Strategy is currently being developed and will go to consultation before it is finalised. Nicola reported that they are still having limited success in getting injury prevention on the agenda of Indigenous organisations in Victoria. Margaret Thomas reported that Victoria is supporting several falls prevention projects across a range of settings.

#### Northern Territory:

Tarun Weeramanthri reported that pool fencing legislation was introduced on 1 January 2003, requiring Australian Standards fencing for new pools, and when properties are sold, or upon change of tenants in rental properties. To encourage existing pool owners to upgrade fencing, a cash bonus and interest free loan scheme has been introduced for a period of 18 months. This initiative is part of a broader focus on water safety education and awareness, with a scheme being planned to provide vouchers for swimming lessons for pre-schoolers and their parents. NT is also currently developing a Water Safety Plan. The NT has recently received significant funding from the Rural Health Branch of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing to fund Kidsafe NT to develop guidelines and associated educational materials for child injury prevention in remote communities.

#### Australian Injury Prevention Network:

Richard Franklin reported that the 6<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Injury Prevention and Control looked like being a success. AIPN is considering underwriting issues for future conferences. AIPN's new website has been completed with a new format and more material. In addition, it has added a list of injury prevention courses. The website address is [www.nisu.flinders.edu.au/aipn/](http://www.nisu.flinders.edu.au/aipn/). AIPN has appointed an Indigenous Liaison Officer to their national and is investigating the possibility of providing mentoring for an Indigenous person.

#### National Injury Surveillance Unit:

James Harrison reported that some internal issues within the Unit had affected productivity over the past year, and that these had now been addressed with several new staff members on board. Most projects were on track, but they were experiencing delays in receiving some hospital and ABS data which may affect timelines for some reports.





## New Zealand

Sandy Brinsdon reported that the NZ Injury Prevention Strategy will be released in June 2003. It has received positive feedback from stakeholders and will be available on the following website <http://www.nzips.govt.nz>. Sandy also provided copies of the newly released Health of Older People Strategy available from the Ministry of Health website <http://www.moh.govt.nz>. Statistics New Zealand has been appointed Injury Information Manager from 1 July 2002. This involves coordinating the production of official injury statistics across agencies that produce data and providing a program of statistics and information services based on the integrated database.

## NSW Falls Policy

Pam Albany gave a presentation to SIPP on the NSW Falls Policy. The ageing population means that NSW will require four new 200 bed acute care facilities and an additional 1,200 nursing home places by 2051. However the impact of the ageing population will commence in 9 years time. The Falls Policy considers managing personal risk factors for fall injuries from younger years to older age groups, managing environmental risks, better co-ordination of services and coverage of prevention strategies, workforce training, and developing and maintaining a research and evaluation focus to improve understanding of best practice in fall injury prevention. It provides for older people in the community, in acute care and residential aged-care facilities. Pam is interested in discussing partnerships with other jurisdictions for research and evaluation relating to the policy. More information on the policy is available at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/public-health/health-promotion/improve/injuryprev/index.htm>.

## NSW New Surveillance Technology

Pam Albany provided a presentation prepared by Tim Churches and Louisa Jorm of the Epidemiology and Surveillance Branch of NSW Health on the ED surveillance for the Sydney 2000 Olympic games and text data mining techniques for Emergency Department injury surveillance. The purpose built data base was used in 15 sentinel EDs over a 38-day period. A number of target conditions, including injuries occurring outside the home, were included. Although communicable diseases were the main focus in planning, no outbreaks were detected. The main incidents prompting public health responses during the Games were related to injury. There was an increase in presentations relating to cuts by glass at an ED close to the Olympic sites. As a result glass containers were withdrawn from sale at these sites. There were frequent presentations for injuries relating to foot-propelled scooters, mainly in children and associated with school holidays. SOCOG was alerted about this issue and scooters were banned from venues. There were three presentations for grand mal seizures associated with ecstasy use in one night, and this prompted warnings to all EDs. Text mining is an extension to unstructured textual data searches and a systematic method of identifying issues of interest or concern.

## Development of Priorities for a new National Injury Prevention Plan

The National Injury Surveillance Unit (NISU) is preparing a report for the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing to identify potential priority issues for the next National Injury Prevention Plan. The draft Options document was presented by James Harrison, Sophie Pointer and Jerry Moller and provided a contextual basis for considering topics and





proposes and described a set of topics as possible priorities for discussion. The topics for consideration for 2003 and beyond consist of five broad-based population topics (elderly 75+, children 0 – 14, emerging adults 15 – 24, rural and remote population) and one risk factor based topic (alcohol and injury). Members provided feedback to NISU on the draft report but were supportive of the general direction being taken.

### **Injury Prevention Research Institutions of Australasia (IPRI)**

SIPP members met informally with IPRI members during the SIPP meeting and discussed the potential for formal liaison with this group. SIPP members agreed that it may be beneficial to hold a joint meeting in the future and provide a joint statement to the National Public Health Partnership on issues relating to injury research.

### **National Coronial Information System**

Kerryn Mulvenna from NCIS provided SIPP members with an information session on the recent developments with the system. Members agreed that NCIS was an extremely valuable research and planning tool for injury prevention and supported its use.

### **Strategic directions of SIPP**

SIPP agreed to a review of the current Terms of Reference and governance arrangements and will progress this over the next few months.

### **Workforce Issues**

Members the workforce project based at the University of WA and currently funded through the Commonwealth under the Public Health Education and Research Program (PHERP Innovations Round 2) for a project to increase the capacity of the injury prevention workforce. SIPP members have previously given in-principle for this project. Several SIPP members also indicated that their respective jurisdictions would provide a financial contribution to this project as per the AHMAC cost-shared formula. Members noted that Michael Tilse (Queensland) will represent SIPP on the project Reference Group.

### **Joint projects**

SIPP is continuing discussions on providing background issues papers on specific injuries for the use of Coroners in their investigations of injury-related deaths. Members agreed to auspice the National Poisons Prevention Initiative, a joint project between the Injury Surveillance and Control Unit from the South Australian Department of Human Services and the Injury Prevention section of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing. This project will include an assessment of the child resistance of pharmaceutical products sold in non-reclosable packaging.

### **Future meetings**

SIPP meeting dates for 2003 are:

- 26 August 2003 by teleconference
- 18/19 November 2003 in Melbourne.

### **More information**

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SIPP is a sub-committee of the National Public Health Partnership. To obtain more information on SIPP or the Partnership, see the SIPP web page at <http://www.nphp.gov.au/sipp/index.htm> or contact the SIPP Secretariat at [kerry.smith@health.gov.au](mailto:kerry.smith@health.gov.au)

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