



COMMUNIQUE

21 AUGUST 2003 MEETING

The 9th Meeting of the Strategic Injury Prevention Partnership was held in Brisbane on 21 August 2003. Members attending the meeting were Rod McClure (Co-Chair), John Scott (Co-Chair), James Harrison (AIHW), Bruce Wight and Kerry Smith (Commonwealth & SIPP Secretariat), Richard Franklin (AIPN), Pam Albany (NSW), Michael Tilse (Queensland), Ron Somers (SA), Ingrid Coote (ACT), Nicola Rabot (Victoria), Stan Bordeaux (TAS), John Wunsch (Consumer Policy Division, Treasury). Also in attendance were Paul Vardon and Phil Carswell (Queensland), Annamaree Reisch (Commonwealth), and Belinda Brandon (SIPP Secretariat).

Apologies were received from Nicole Bennett (WA), Tarun Weeramanthri (NT) and Don Matheson (New Zealand).

Updates from jurisdictions

Members provided updates on their recent work.

Treasury

John Wunsch reported that Treasury is working jointly with Health to plan a response and develop a national strategy on the issue of child blind cord strangulation. The Consumer Safety Unit at Treasury is issuing a 65B Statutory Notice and national media awareness campaign, which will incorporate some printed consumer materials. Secondly, the standard for motor vehicle jacks is being revised in parallel with a consumer awareness campaign and the development of consumer oriented materials. Thirdly, the consumer affairs area has revised the mandatory toy standard to bring it up to the International Standards Organisation (ISO) level in Australia with a new Australian Standard. John also reported that other recent bans have included dart gun sets, jelly cups and liquid yo-yo balls. The liquid yo-yo balls were deemed to be a choking hazard.

Tasmania:

Stan Bordeaux reported that the head of the Trauma and Accident Registry in Tasmania appears to have prevention firmly on the agenda. Also, in terms of data collection positive collaborative work is occurring relating to victims of trauma who are not admitted to Accident and Emergency departments. Thirdly, there is a project underway to identify the source of child poisoning cases that involve pharmaceutical products and admission to Accident and Emergency departments. Stan concluded with the observation that competing with other emerging issues such as the rise of overweight and obesity, is a challenge and has had an effect on the profile and momentum of injury prevention in Tasmania.





South Australia:

Ron Somers gave an update informing Members that the report titled *Safety at the Interface* is now successfully published. Ron also reported about a recent incident relating to lack of enforcement of the Australian Standard for children's furniture such as cots and bunk beds. Members discussed possible alternative approaches on the issue. Ron commented that the lack of action on this issue was particularly disappointing in this instance, as progress on issues at the standards level, especially in relation to child safety, often lead to legislative change.

Commonwealth:

Bruce Wight reported that the National Falls Prevention in Older People Initiative had been extended in the last budget. Secondly, the Commonwealth hosted a meeting of State and Territory Falls Managers from all Jurisdictions on 23 May 2003 and Falls Prevention Community Demonstration Projects for Project Managers in early June 2003. He also reported about the alcohol advertising self-regulation code and the current action to review and tighten this code.

New South Wales:

Pam Albany reported the positive news that Indigenous trauma was currently on the NSW Health agenda. A document is being coordinated by four separate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander injury prevention projects. However, she also reported that in New South Wales the 17 Area Health Services (AHS) are operating autonomously and many are reducing their commitment by diverting injury funding to other issues.

Queensland:

Michael Tilse spoke about a three year child injury prevention project which is being jointly funded and managed with the Department of Emergency Services. The initiative is occurring in the Mackay and Mount Isa region and Project Officers commenced work at the end of April 2003.

In terms of some of the barriers currently being faced in Injury Prevention in Queensland, Michael also informed Members that the falls prevention initiative of the quality improvement and enhancement strategy finished at the end of June 2003. However, a revised version of the Best Practice Guidelines for Falls Prevention in Public Hospitals and State Government Residential Aged Care facilities (with a Community Integration Supplement) has been released. Finally, in relation to pool fencing, legislation is currently being amended, and changes are encouraging and a positive step forward, even if they do not extend to include regular pool fence inspections at this stage.

Australian Capital Territory:

Ingrid Coote reported that the ACT does not currently have a coordinated approach to injury prevention issues. However, there are a number of positive projects happening including Kidsafe health clinics, which have engaged in campaigns focusing on the prevention of scalds and poisoning in children. Also the ACT employs a coordinator to work on falls prevention in the elderly with a coordinated approach across the continuum of care, including a falls and





balance clinic which specialises in falls risk assessment. Finally, Ingrid mentioned that ACT Health had requested information about injury prevention in relation to bushfires, as a result of the traumatic bushfire damage experienced in the region last summer.

Victoria:

The Victorian research initiative of establishing a research officer at the Victorian State Coroner's Office is continuing to progress well. The latest report to be released focuses on Recreational Vessel Fatalities and will be forwarded to all SIPP members in the near future. It was also reported the new Director of Public Health / Chief Health Officer wishes to build up the Victorian Injury Prevention Program. In general all initiatives are progressing well and there are no major project difficulties to report.

Australian Injury Prevention Network:

Richard Franklin reported on feedback from the 6th National Injury Prevention and Control Conference held in Perth in March 2003. He reported that feedback on the Conference was generally very positive although some sectors of the Injury community, particularly practitioners and researchers had expressed that they were under-represented in terms of opportunities to present papers and abstracts. This feedback has been considered and fed into the planning process for the next National Conference on Injury Prevention and Control to be held in Mackay in September 2004. Richard reported that although the Conference had run at a profit, it had been marginal due to the upscale nature of the venue and additional overheads this entailed. However, the planning for the 2004 Conference will benefit from this experience. Further information is available on the AIPN website at: www.nisu.flinders.edu.au/aipn/.

National Injury Surveillance Unit:

James Harrison reported on the recent output of the unit including;

- discussion paper on the next National Injury Prevention Plan
- child Blind cord strangulation response
- discussion document on National Coronial Information System (NCIS)
- CATI document
- report on spinal cord injuries.

James also reported that other work included the WA linked database for verification and insights into national data linkage. Some of the barriers recently encountered included long delays in the release of hospitals data, due to errors in the data set and the loss of a valued member of staff who was recruited to work overseas in the injury field.

Development of Priorities for a new National Injury Prevention Plan

The National Injury Surveillance Unit (NISU) has written a discussion paper for the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing to identify options and potential priority issues for the next National Injury Prevention Plan. It was agreed that Jurisdictions would use the draft options document to generate discussion with stakeholders within their constituency and that Members would communicate the feedback to SIPP as part of the





consultation process. In addition, a Working Group of SIPP Members was formed to oversee the development of the new National Injury Prevention Plan.

Strategic directions of SIPP

John Scott, the SIPP Co-Chair commented that injury prevention is an important issue which should remain on the health agenda. Members agreed on wording of a mission statement to guide the work of SIPP and provide an overarching statement to the current terms of reference. After final confirmation of consensus, members will seek NPHP endorsement before releasing the statement.

National Coronial Information System

James Harrison (NISU) alerted members that a new mechanism for reporting issues of concern was being trialed within the NCIS database. Under this system there is a contractual obligation for users of data to bring matters of concern to the attention of Coroners. He also suggested that SIPP could inform Coroners about its reporting related networks that may work to the benefit of both SIPP and all Coroners. John Wunsch (Treasury) suggested the following issues as having a consumer product orientation and being a possible area for reporting injury and/or deaths associated with the use of step ladders, motor vehicle jacks and mobile soccer posts.

Workforce Issues

SIPP members have previously given in-principle support for the injury 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. Several SIPP members have provided a financial contribution to this project. Members noted that Michael Tilse (Queensland) will represent SIPP for this project and will seek an update on the progress of the project.

Joint projects

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. The project has commenced and will include an assessment of the child resistance of pharmaceutical products sold in non-reclosable packaging in Australia.

Future meetings

SIPP final meeting date for 2003 is:

- 18 and 19 November 2003 face to face meeting in Melbourne.

More information

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

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