

## **(1026) Organising A Pilot Multinational Injury Surveillance Study**

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### **PROBLEM**

Progress of a public health response to violence in particular and injury in general in countries with limited resources has been impeded by the lack of a systematic approach to utilise comparable data sources of injury. This multinational study responds to the World Health Organisation's (WHO) call for multi-sectoral and collaborative efforts for the prevention of violent injury. In particular, this project responds to some of the WHO's recommendations issued in its World Report on Violence and Health. Recommendation 2 calls for an increase in the capacity for collection of data on violence and Recommendation 3 to carry out research on violence, its causes, consequences and prevention in different population groups and different cultural settings.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this pilot study is to systematically collect, review and evaluate the context in which specific external injuries occur in a great diversity of socio-cultural populations utilising the same data collection procedures through an emergency department surveillance system in selected hospitals in ten countries located in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. The ten countries are: Kenya, Zambia, Uganda, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo in Africa and Colombia, Brazil, Bolivia and El Salvador in Latin America and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean. The types of injuries to be studied are violence-related injuries and road traffic injuries. The second purpose of this study proposal is to test the implementation of a surveillance system for these types of injury following the World Health Organisation's guidelines in countries where no such system is in place (e.g. Bolivia, Puerto Rico, Zambia, Uganda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria and Kenya). Thirdly, the study aims to collaborate and expand the injury surveillance system in countries where such a system is already in place (i.e. Brazil, Colombia, and El Salvador)

### **METHOD**

The study is divided in two phases. Phase I is the preliminary or formative evaluation in each country to determine the hospital environment, logistics and injury caseload that would be expected during the prospective data collection in Phase II. Phase II is the actual collection of external injury data at the designated emergency departments (ED) in each country for a twelve-month period utilising a questionnaire designed by a joint PAHO/CDC injury project in Central America.

### **RESULTS**

The participation of injury researchers from ten countries with diverse social, cultural and economic backgrounds to implement an injury surveillance mechanism in emergency departments at designated hospitals is possible once committed researchers are identified and funding is secured. Collection of data during Phase I has been completed successfully by most study participants. The specific type of injury caseload estimates allowed for estimating the required person-time effort to successfully complete Phase II of the project (i.e. prospective collection of injury data). Phase II will be ongoing at the time of this international conference. Preliminary findings of the first three to six months of data collection will be presented at the conference in Durban, South Africa.

### **CONCLUSION**

The conclusion we wish to arrive at is that it is possible to implement an injury surveillance system in countries with limited resources with initial support for training and guidance. The value of surveillance systems is determined by presenting reliable data on the context in which injury occurs in a given population served by the participating hospitals. The findings obtained can be used for advocacy, developing education strategies for the general population and providing convincing evidence to government officials to facilitate decision-making on government policy for the prevention and control of injury.