



Debra Houry, MD, MPH, Director National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

Debra Houry, MD, MPH, is the CDC's Director of the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (Injury Center). Dr. Houry leads innovative research and science-based programs to prevent injury and violence and to reduce their consequences.

Dr. Houry joined the CDC in October 2014 after years of partnering with the Injury Center on injury and violence prevention efforts. She brings to this role, frontline experience of preventing injuries and violence as an emergency room physician and expert researcher.

Injury and Violence Prevention

During her first year as the Director, the Injury Center expanded support for key programs that aid states in preventing prescription drug overdose and better reporting of violent death statistics. The Prescription Drug Overdose: Prevention for States program gives 16 states a surge of resources and direct support from the CDC to advance the most-promising prevention strategies. The National Violent Death Reporting System expanded from 18 to 32 states, which enables greater collection of critical data on violent deaths that will inform development of tailored prevention and intervention efforts in states to reduce violent deaths.

Across the Life-Span

As an emergency room physician, Dr. Houry treats patients after car crashes, overdoses, and assaults. She knows the connection between public health and clinical medicine and its importance to injury and violence prevention among all age groups. As a mother of a school-age child and the daughter of aging parents, Dr. Houry personally understands the work of injury prevention across the life-span. She champions awareness of elder falls, safe prescribing to prevent prescription drug overdose, and public education on sexual assaults and intimate partner violence. Through

the STEADI (Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths and Injuries) program, older adults and their health care providers learn how to decrease fall-related death and injury. The CDC's Dating Matter initiative strategy is a comprehensive teen dating violence prevention approach to empower youth to build safe relationships and recognize the warning signs of potentially violent situations.

Career Highlights, Awards and Recognition

Dr. Houry earned her MD and MPH degrees from Tulane University and completed her residency training in emergency medicine at Denver Health Medical Center. Before joining the CDC she served as Vice-Chair and Associate Professor in the Department of Emergency Medicine at Emory University School of Medicine and Associate Professor in the Departments of Behavioral Science and Health Education and in Environmental Health at the Rollins School of Public Health. In her career, Dr. Houry has authored more than 100 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters on injury prevention and violence and has been the recipient of several national awards. She has been recognized with many awards including the American Public Health Association's Jay Drotman Award; the first Linda Saltzman Memorial Intimate Partner Violence Researcher Award from the Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma; the Academy of Women in Academic Emergency Medicine's Researcher Award; in addition to selection in Public Voices Fellowship, Leadership Atlanta and the Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine programs. She is past president of the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine, the Society for Advancement of Violence and Injury Research, and Emory University Senate. Dr. Houry has served on numerous other boards and committees within the field of injury and violence prevention.

