

Annual Report of Major Outputs, Accomplishments, and Outcomes, July 2016–June 2017

Florida Department of Health, Fundamental Plus State-Based Occupational Health and Safety Surveillance Program (OHSP)

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Aims of the Program

1. Execute the activities of a fundamental occupational health and safety program (OSHP).
2. Enhance and maintain an OHSP focus on the construction industry through surveillance, research, and intervention activities with a special emphasis on the characterization and prevention of construction fatalities.
3. Re-establish adult blood lead poisoning outreach, investigation, and intervention support to County Health Department (CHD) epidemiologists.

Major Outputs and Accomplishments

Presentations

- Baniak M. “Occupational Health Indicators Trends, Florida, 2004-2013.” 2017 Occupational Injury and Illness Coalition Annual Meeting, February 2017.
- Jordan M. “Occupational Health and Safety Program (OHSP) Florida Department of Health (DOH) Year in Review. 2017 Occupational Injury and Illness Coalition Annual Meeting, February 2017.
- Baniak M and Chalmers J. “Evaluating Work-Related Injuries Using the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS).” Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Annual Conference, June 2017.

Manuscripts

- Evaluation of diagnostic codes in morbidity and mortality data sources for heat-related illness surveillance. Harduar Morano L, Watkins S. Public Health Reports 2017 April;132(3): 326-335. doi: 10.1177/0033354917699826

Other Outputs

- Submitted 20 out of 24 occupational health indicators
- Adult blood lead data submitted to National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) program for the years 2015 and 2016.

Major Outcomes

Capacity Building

A program assistant continues to aid with adult blood lead surveillance and other OHSP activities.

Intermediate Outcome

Two flyers on occupational lead exposure and take-home lead have been printed and disseminated to county health departments and occupational health partners to increase awareness of safety practices that can reduce lead exposure to workers and their families. The program assistant also leads the Coalition workgroups focusing on regional activities and the development of a newsletter. Additionally, the increased capacity allows for reviewing adult blood lead cases, providing assistance to the CHDs for adult lead poisoning investigations, revising case definition documentation for adult lead poisoning, updating adult blood lead information for the Department’s website, and checking for data quality issues in adult blood lead data.

Potential Outcome

A flyer/fact sheet is in development to increase awareness of occupational lead exposure in indoor gun ranges and preventive actions that can be taken to reduce lead exposure in range workers and their families. The increased capacity of the program assistant also makes it possible to focus more time and effort on the Coalition. The increased Coalition activities have the potential to increase awareness of occupational health and safety issues in Florida and strengthen the collaboration and coordination of efforts between existing members.

Partnership Building

The OHSP hosted the fifth annual Florida Occupational Injury and Illness Coalition meeting in Winter Park, Florida in February 2017. Topics included updates on OHSP projects, Worker Protection Standards, farmworker health, near-misses in the construction industry, heat illness, occupational injuries in the private vs. public sector, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) chemical carcinogen policy briefing, comorbidities and occupational health in migrant populations, and improving partnerships. Coalition members represent government, university, community, and private organizations.

Intermediate Outcome

The Coalition hosted several webinars, including one on sampling for biological agents in an occupational setting. The goal of this webinar was to increase awareness of different types of microorganisms, allergens, and molds in occupational settings and the generally accepted assessment protocols. Another webinar was also held on protecting construction workers in confined spaces. As a result, the Coalition Listserv has increased in membership. A quarterly occupational health and safety newsletter was also developed with the inaugural issue disseminated in December 2016 and the second issue distributed in April 2017.

Potential Outcome

At the annual meeting, Coalition members expressed a desire for the Coalition to be more active between annual meetings. Resultant projects include planning an additional yearly meeting, continuing the quarterly newsletter, and increase webinars.

Collaborative and Contractual Projects

1) Teaching Temporary Employees About Competencies in Health and Safety (TTEACHS) Study is a collaborative effort with the University of Miami and NIOSH. The goals of this pilot study were to 1) describe the occupational safety and health (OSH) experiences of temporary workers employed in the construction industry, and 2) adapt the NIOSH *Youth@Work*--Talking Safety foundational OSH knowledge and skills training curriculum to be suitable for use with adult temporary construction workers.

Intermediate Outcome

Four one-hour focus groups were conducted with 38 total temporary construction workers to gather data on temporary worker experiences, which provided insight to help develop and adapt the curriculum. The newly adapted curriculum was drafted and presented to 19 temporary construction workers at a full-day curriculum feedback session. Preliminary qualitative findings from the focus group discussions describe the workers risk assessment skills, barriers and protective factors to health and safety, and job site safety culture.

Potential Outcome

The insights gained from this pilot study are crucial to understanding the occupational safety experiences of temporary workers in construction and how to adapt training programs to meet the needs of this high-risk working population. The resulting curriculum is aimed to increase worker knowledge and awareness of potential hazards at construction worksites that pose a risk to injury.

2) Data was analyzed for the Multistate Work-Related Emergency Department Visits and Heat Illness study. This is a collaborate effort among DOH OSHP and health departments from Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, and Tennessee to characterize the relationship between heat-related health outcomes and ambient temperature and air pollution.

Potential Outcome

Dissemination of these results will add to the literature on occupational heat illness and inform local, state, and federal policies/practices on protecting outdoor workers in hot environments.

3) A data use agreement was signed with the Florida Bureau of Vital Statistics to allow access to death data for work-related mortalities. This data will be used to validate the cases of occupational deaths in the newly developed Florida Occupational Fatality Surveillance database.

Intermediate Outcome

The Florida Occupational Fatality Surveillance database was created because data from the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) is delayed by multiple years, verifying the CFOI information is time consuming, and CFOI provides little detail of the event. The Florida Occupational Fatality Surveillance database is updated each month, therefore, the database is never more than 30 days delayed.