

## **Annual Report of Major Outputs, Accomplishments, and Outcomes, July 2015–June 2016**

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
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**

- Jordan M, Jagger M, Kintziger K, Chalmers J, Duclos C. “Conquering Time and Space: Effectively Using Weather Data to Assess Environmental Health.” National Environmental Health Association Annual Educational Conference. July 2015.
- Chalmers J. “Racial/Ethnic Differences in Payor Source for Work-Related Traumatic Injuries.” Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Annual Conference, June 2016.
- Harduar Morano L and Chalmers J. “Beyond the Indicators: Florida's Experience with Surveillance of Work-Place Amputations.” Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Annual Conference, June 2016.

#### **Manuscripts**

- Occupational heat-related illness emergency department visits and inpatient hospitalizations in the southeast region, 2007-2011. Harduar Morano L, Bunn TL, Lackovic M, Lavender A, Dang GT, Chalmers JJ, Li Y, Zhang L, Flammia DD. Am J Ind Med. 2015 Oct;58(10):1114-25. Epub 2015 Aug 25.

#### **Other Outputs**

- Submitted 18 out of 24 occupational health indicators
- Adult blood lead data submitted to National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) program for the years 2013 and 2014.

### **Major Outcomes**

#### ***Capacity Building***

A program assistant was hired part-time to aid with adult blood lead surveillance and other OHSP activities.

#### **Potential Outcome**

Two flyers on take-home lead have been developed and will be disseminated in the coming year to increase awareness of preventive actions that can reduce lead exposure to workers and their families. The increased capacity also makes it possible to focus more time and effort on the Coalition. Multiple educational webinars have been scheduled. The program assistant leads the Coalition workgroups focusing on regional activities and the development of a newsletter. All of these 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.

### Intermediate Outcome

Increased Department capacity 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.

### ***Partnership Building***

The OHSP hosted the fourth annual Florida Occupational Injury and Illness Coalition meeting in Miami, Florida in February 2016. Topics included updates on OHSP projects, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) silica regulations, farmworker health, heat-related illness, firefighters and cancer, green cleaning, and improving partnerships. Coalition members represent government, university, community, and private organizations.

### 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 a newsletter and organizing subgroups to spearhead regional activities.

### Intermediate Outcome

The Coalition held a webinar on the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. The goal of this webinar was to increase awareness of the industry and occupation data that is available in the dataset and inform researchers of how they can obtain this data from the Department. As a result, there has been an increase in data requests for the industry and occupation data which is only available through special request.

### ***Collaborative and Contractual Projects***

**1) The Falls Reported Among Minority Employees in Residential Construction Pilot Study (FRAME)** was a collaborative effort with the University of Miami. This pilot study was designed to inform and develop a unique fall-related near miss measurement instrument for workers employed in the construction industry.

### Intermediate Outcome

The newly developed near miss measurement instrument was used to collect data from minority construction workers as well as temporary and full-time workers in order to identify variations on near miss experiences between the worker groups. This instrument aimed to increase worker knowledge and awareness of potential hazards at construction worksites that pose a risk to injury.

**2) Data analysis was completed for the iButtons and Heath Study.** A collaborative project between the OHSP, the Florida Environmental Public Health Tracking Program (EPHT), the Florida Building Resiliency Against Climate Effects (BRACE) Program, and Florida State University to assess how temperature and humidity experienced by outdoor workers varies from what is reported by weather stations, and how it relates to heat watches and warnings.

### Potential Outcomes

Dissemination of these results will add to the literature on the use of iButtons for heat-related occupational monitoring.

**3) An amendment to the data use agreement with the Florida Division of Workers' Compensation was approved and the OHSP was able to obtain federal employer identification**

number (FEIN). The OHSP was able to collaborate with the NIOSH Workers' Compensation Center on methodology to link workers' compensation claims by FEIN to Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages denominator data to calculate claims rates for amputations by industry.

#### Intermediate Outcomes

This methodology and results were presented at the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) annual conference and other states were able to learn how similar linkage could be done with their data.

**4)** A data use agreement was signed with NIOSH to allow Florida to participate in the National Occupational Mortality Surveillance (NOMS). NOMS is "a state-based program that monitors or provides periodic surveillance of work-related acute and chronic disease mortality among workers in many U.S. states." Florida will be able to submit death certificate data for inclusion in national fatality estimates.

#### Potential Outcomes

As part of this exchange, Florida will be able to receive the industry and occupation codes for work-related fatalities. This will enhance the state-level work-related fatality surveillance.

**5)** The OHSP partnered with the Florida Injury Prevention Program to analyze racial/ethnic differences in expected payer for traumatic work-related injuries in the Florida trauma registry. This analysis was undertaken because it was suspected that Hispanic workers in Florida utilize workers' compensation less often than other racial/ethnic groups which may be skewing surveillance analysis results that are dependent on use of workers' compensation.

#### Potential Outcomes

The results of the analysis found that Hispanic workers in Florida have workers' compensation as the expected payer significantly less often than non-Hispanic black or white workers for traumatic work-related injuries. These findings may impact the interpretation of Florida's work-related surveillance data that relies on workers' compensation as expected payer as a means of identifying work-relatedness. While it cannot be proven that the insurance usage patterns seen in the trauma registry extend to less severe work-related injuries, it is probable that the surveillance results from other data sources showing that Hispanics have the lowest work-related morbidity rates in Florida by race/ethnicity is artificially low. This possibility will be taken into account when assessing program priorities for outreach and interventions.

**6)** The OHSP epidemiologist led a CSTE workgroup that created a guidance document on occupational health measures and indicators that lend themselves to substate analysis and suggested denominator sources.

#### Final Outcome

The workgroup presented a final guidance document to the CSTE Occupational Subcommittee in June of 2016. The document will be available on the CSTE website and will aid other entities in their sub-state level analysis of occupational health measures. Florida is using the document as a starting point for creating additional sub-state level data for the state EPHT website.