

Annual Report of Major Outputs and Outcomes
Fundamental State-based Occupational Safety & Health Surveillance Program
Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH)
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Major Outputs:

- 2016 Worksite Wellness Survey

The OH Surveillance Program is conducting the 2016 Worksite Wellness Survey, a mixed-mode sample survey of about 3,000 medium sized businesses (100-249 employees) across the state. The survey will help to determine existing policies and environments affecting physical activity, nutrition, tobacco use, injuries, health screenings, etc. at the worksite. Currently, over 500 employers have participated in the survey. *Intermediate Outcome:* In addition to informing DPH on exiting worksite wellness efforts in businesses across the state, the survey connects businesses interested in implementing worksite health programs with the Georgia Working on Health Initiative. Many employers completing the survey have expressed interest in being connected with the program.

- Georgia Plan for Responder, Safety, Tracking and Resilience

The OH Surveillance Program is collaborating in the development a plan for monitoring emergency responder health and safety called Georgia Responder, Safety, Tracking, and Resilience (R-STAR). A pilot project for the plan will be implemented using Environmental Health Strike Teams and EMTs. R-STAR is a collaborative effort between DPH Emergency Preparedness and Response, Environmental Health, Epidemiology, Nursing, and Mental Health. The OH epidemiologist participated in workgroup meetings and led the development of a needs assessment for the plan, which is modeled after the Emergency Responder Health Monitoring Surveillance (ERHMS) system. The assessment was completed by Public Health Responders in health districts across the state and results of the assessment were shared at the Georgia DPH Responder Safety and Planning Summit. *Intermediate Outcome:* Development of a safety plan is important for monitoring and protecting public health responders who go into the field for routine or emergent duties. It will also helpful in meeting the needs of Public Health Preparedness Capability 14. The needs assessment allowed for a realistic discussion of current capabilities and needs before implementation of the project.

- Elevated Adult Blood Lead Activities

Discussions have started between the OH Principal Investigator, OH Epidemiologist, DPH Environmental Health, and Georgia Tech OSHA Consultation Program about planning for elevated blood lead follow-up activities and educating the industries about the program. The Georgia DPH Environmental Health Program provided the OH Surveillance Program with detailed data that will be used to create a report describing the burden of adults with elevated blood lead levels in Georgia. The ABLES database is being reviewed to assess its completeness for elevated blood lead follow-up activities. In addition, the DPH Division of Health Protection Director has paved the way for the Georgia Occupational Health Surveillance program to communicate with major industries in Georgia that are at risk for lead exposures by linking the program with a key industry stakeholder. *Potential Outcome:* These are major first steps to establishing elevated adult blood lead follow-up activities in the state. The elevated adult blood lead data report will be used to help show the need for follow-up activities and provide areas of focus for creation and dissemination of educational materials.

Conferences and Presentations:

- Guest Lecturer Emory University Rollins School of Public Health

The OH epidemiologist educated graduate students on OH Surveillance in Georgia, including the major aims of the program, how the data is used, and how it can be accessed or used for research. *Intermediate Outcome:* Participating as a lecturer provided more visibility for the OH Surveillance program and connected the program to key staff of the school's Environmental and Occupational Health Program, which has resulted in opportunities to collaborate on research projects and serve as a practicum or internship site for students.

- NIOSH/State Occupational Lung Disease Surveillance Meeting

The OH epidemiologist attended the NIOSH/State Occupational Lung Disease Surveillance Meeting in September 2015. *Potential Outcome:* Participation in this meeting not only allowed for learning and interaction among multiple states, but provided enlightenment on silica exposures and the need for further exploration of silicosis in Georgia.

- Georgia Public Health Association (GPHA) and Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) Conference Oral Presentations

The OH epidemiologist conducted oral presentations at the 87th Annual GPHA Annual Conference and the 2016 CSTE Annual Conference entitled “Assessing Tobacco-Free School Policies as Worksite Wellness Policies in Georgia Public Schools.” The presentations were based on results from analysis of the 2014 Georgia School Health Profiles Survey (SHPS), which is used to monitor and assess school health policies and practices within the state. *Intermediate Outcome:* The presentation showed the utility of the SHPS in assessing how school policies affect faculty/staff. The results helped to confirm the need to focus on faculty/staff in enforcement and cessation efforts when implementing tobacco free school policies.

- Georgia Suicide Prevention Coalition Meeting Presentation

The OH epidemiologist and PI were invited to present data on suicide in Georgia to members of Suicide Prevention Coalition. The OH epidemiologist presented on suicide by occupation among workers in Georgia using data from the Violent Death Reporting System. *Intermediate Outcome:* This was the first time an analysis of the risk of suicide by occupation was presented to this key group of suicide prevention stakeholders in the state. The presentation brought much needed awareness and discussion on the prevention of suicide for workers. A follow-up meeting to discuss potential activities for targeting workers at risk is expected.

Reports and Data Summaries:

- Work-Related Pesticide Exposure and Occupational Health Indicators Data Summaries Published

Georgia’s Work-Related Pesticide Exposures Data Summary has been published and available on the GA DPH Website and the NIOSH State-Based Occupational Health Clearinghouse. The summary was also featured in the October 2015 issue of *NIOSH eNews*. Three additional data summaries on the 2012 occupational health indicators have also been published and made available on GA DPH website and the Clearinghouse. *Potential Outcome:* These summaries have been shared with members of the Occupational Health Advisory Committee. They can be used for increasing public awareness of work-related injuries and illnesses in Georgia as well as for targeting prevention and intervention efforts.

- Tobacco Use Worksite Wellness Policies in Georgia Public Schools Data Summary

A data summary entitled “Tobacco Use Worksite Wellness Policies in Georgia Public Schools” was created and posted on DPH website at: <http://dph.georgia.gov/georgia-occupational-health-and-safety-surveillance-program>. The data summary describes the extent to which Georgia public middle and high schools have developed, implemented, and enforced a policy that creates a totally tobacco-free environment for faculty/staff.

Intermediate Outcome: This summary was shared with the state Tobacco Use Prevention Program and with District Health Promotion Coordinators across the state. Results from the summary confirmed the need to focus on faculty/staff which has led to a complete revamping of enforcement and cessation activities for faculty/staff in Georgia schools with tobacco-free policies.

- BRFSS Occupation Data Included in Tobacco Use Disparities Report

The OH epidemiologist collaborated with the Tobacco Use Prevention epidemiologist to include a comprehensive section on occupation in the 2016 Georgia Adult Disparities in Tobacco Use Report. This report can be found on DPH website at:

<http://dph.georgia.gov/tobacco-use-reports-data-summaries-and-questionnaires> and has been shared with District Health Promotion Coordinators across the state.

Potential Outcome: This report will lead to increased recognition of occupation as an important demographic variable and can show people across the state how disparities in tobacco use exist by occupation.

Peer-Reviewed Publications:

- Manuscript Accepted for Publication in American Journal of Preventive Medicine

The OH epidemiologist, PI and Georgia Violent Death Reporting System epidemiologists submitted a manuscript entitled “Violent Deaths among Georgia Workers: An Examination of Suicides and Homicides by Occupation, 2006-2009” to the American Journal of Preventive Medicine. The manuscript has been approved for publication.

Potential Outcome: This manuscript will help to bring attention to risk of violent deaths by occupation and show the need to create a new variable for work-relatedness in the Violent Death Reporting System. The PI and OH epidemiologist have begun discussions for creating this new variable with the NIOSH Division of Safety Research and the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control Division of Violence Prevention.