

**NIOSH/CSTE/MAP-ERC
Western States Occupational Network (WEST-ON)
Second Annual Meeting
September 24-25, 2009
Denver, CO**

For next meeting: Include representatives from Mexico, Canada, tribal epi leaders, still include labor colleagues.

Thursday September 24, 2009

John Sestito, NIOSH: NIOSH Surveillance Program Update – Guidelines, Coordination website, and 2007 Charts- Introduced minimum guidelines and discussed purpose; NIOSH data portal (one stop shop for all NIOSH data resources); fatal occ injuries and non fatal illness by state with regional comparison (All charts available on CD)

Discussion:

- electronic health records
- climate change and OH&S

Corey Campbell, PHPS Fellow, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment: Developing a State OSH Program from Scratch – How to Utilize Existing State Data Sources for OSH- Outlined steps taken to create an OH&S program in CO from scratch.

Discussion:

- How to become a SOII & ABLES state
- How do we create interest in OH in PHPS fellowship
- How do states get a PHPS fellow
- If MAP ERC and NIOSH Denver Regional Office were not in CO, what would the health department have done
- What is your relationship with your partners and what agreements have been made
- How does the health department create sustainability after the fellowship
- How do you work with state workers comp
- How can workers comp data be made available to states

Recommendations-

- 1 OH specialist in each state or regional fellow (shared between 3-4 states)
- Utilize existing fellowship structures
- Utilize university fellows/graduate students
- Need to produce a business case for OH capacity in states or case for at least 1 OH fellow in states
- Write letter to Dr Frieden regarding state capacity for OH

Cindy Robinson, NIOSH: National Occupational Mortality Surveillance (NOMS) System for states- Provided NOMS overview and description; Invited any state interested in participating to work with NIOSH on further development

Discussion:

- Will the online system be an interactive system and available to researchers
- Promote NOMS with states and academia
- How much will this cost
- NORMS (respiratory) is online and available for public use

David Douphrate, Colorado State University: Workers' Compensation Data for State Research-

Described what workers compensation (wc) systems have in common, what defines an injury and what is available regarding injuries in wc; Provided guidance on how to analyze injury data from wc, cost analyses, and limitations and benefits of this data source

Discussion:

- Do private employers report data to NCCI and can you/how do you work with them
- What happens when lawyers are involved
- Do accepted claims culminate in an impairment rating
- What was your sales pitch to Pinnacle to get them to buy in
- What other agencies work with insurers in terms of loss control and how is it made available for public use
- What capacity do states have to analyze wc data

Friday, September 25

Dawn Castillo, NIOSH: NIOSH State-Based Fatality Surveillance Using Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Model- Provided an overview of the FACE program and included stories from western states, figures, rates, and use of fatality narratives

Discussion:

- State have used videos or personal vignettes in tabletop exercises at worksites
- Academic institutions have been used to allow students to finish fatality reports
- FACE is fact-finding, never finger pointing
- Use findings from FACE to manufacture engineering controls
- Some states deputize their academic institution to do follow-up
- There is a FACE investigation manual (how-to) being revised
- Are there Spanish-speaking resources and how do you deal with language barriers during follow-up

Mary Lynn, OSHA Region VIII: OSHA – Federal and State Activities in the West- Presented the focus of national and region 8 OSHA programs; Discussed region 8 federal/state plan interaction; Introduced Serious Violator Enforcement program and other projects; discussed new rulemaking and consultation program

Discussion:

- Why wasn't agriculture addressed
- What about ergonomics
- Does OSHA report to state health department for fatalities (no)
- How do you work with municipalities (cannot enforce standards in local settings)

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Nancy Burton and John Gibbins, NIOSH: Health Hazard Evaluation in a Texas Middle School- Briefly introduced what an HHE is and how they are done; Provided 1 example of mold in a middle school in TX

Discussion:

- Many questions concerning indoor air quality standards, rulemaking, etc.

Darryl Alexander, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO: Union Interaction with States- Discussed Protecting American Workers Act; Discussed case study of mold in a Texas middle school; Discussed need for building scientists/specialists to be a part of the conversation additionally state health department should be equipped with information; Discussed current goals (advocating for green schools, education and training for school workers in health and safety, new guidelines for indoor air quality)

Discussion:

- How can states partner with their department of education
- Have you worked with EPA and/or school nurses to provide information on indoor environment and quality
- How has 'Tools for Schools' been applied

Robert Harrison, CA DOH: New Opportunities for Advancing OSH Surveillance- Count cases because every case counts; Discussed importance of building a strong public health system; Emphasized using data to keep workers safe and healthy on the job

Discussion:

- Cased based information reaches far more people than data/information only
- Know your audience
- Utilize social networking

**Western States Occupational Network (WEST-ON)
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Breakout Session Summaries**

Working with your ERC/Ag Center

The session was beneficial to have time to do some networking. There was time to share information with the states on what resources there are at the ERC/Ag Centers.

Model from NM was discussed on using telemedicine to do OHS health topics lectures – possibly partnering with ERC, Ag Center, School of Medicine, AHEC.

Graduate students, post-graduate students need topics for thesis, dissertation, research projects, etc – could be utilized by states to help in projects – need to set up a mechanism to introduce state folks to students connected with ERC and Ag centers.

Funded position by NIOSH to ERCs for an applied research/surveillance officer –2 year fellowship- to assigned to unfunded state to conduct occupational injury and illness surveillance – mentored at the ERC and at the state.

Pilot projects at ERCs and Ag Centers – make sure states get announcements about the availability of pilot project funding opportunities – use WestON list serve to make sure states know about those opportunities.

ATV deaths – most often categorized as recreationally related events – but often in the western states they are Ag related deaths – ATVs have replaced the horse in cattle operations etc. States may be capturing these deaths in injury prevention/surveillance centers – need to have states hook up with Ag centers to be able to capture those that are related to work related agricultural deaths.

How do states capture data on migrant/seasonal workers – how to use migrant clinic network – topic for next year’s conference.

Occupational Health Indicators

The morning and afternoon breakout sessions were a mixture of state participants with previous experience collecting/utilizing occupational health indicators and participants without any experience. A majority of the participants without experience had plans to start compiling occupational health indicators in the near future.

Common discussion topics from both sessions included:

History of Occupational Health Indicators:

Copies of “Occupational Health Indicators: A Guide for Tracking Work-Related Health Conditions and Their Determinants” were made available to participants and the group briefly discussed the history of the occupational health indicators.

Usefulness of occupational health indicators:

We discussed the usefulness of collecting occupational health indicators (i.e. state-to-state comparison, evaluating trends over time, guiding prevention priorities). State participants with experience collecting occupational health indicators reported to have found value in utilizing the indicators. Some examples of additional value included helping to 'jump start' more in depth research based on data collected and helping to generate ideas for additional occupational health indicators to fit state needs.

Limitations & Challenges:

A handout was provided to participants that included background information on each data source, including known limitations. The group utilized the handout to discuss limitations of the data sources including: undercount, data not available in all states, and missing worker populations. The group also discussed alternative databases to obtain similar state data.

A few additional challenges were discussed including: focusing on disparities, access to denominator data for trend analysis (state- to-state and state-to-national) of indicators over time, and access to information on migrant/immigrant workers. Participants recognized these as important challenges to overcome.

It was emphasized that all data sources have their limitations, but it's important to know and display those for the indicators when giving a report or interpreting the data.

Customizability:

The group also touched on how to customize the indicators for each state. One example that was used in California was to identify the percentage of workers employed in high risk industries and occupations (indicator 14 and 15) as identified by their state as opposed to high risk industries and occupations as identified by BLS.

Recommendations:

We discussed the importance of collaboration and the need to build strong relationships with partners within state organizations in order to collect all 19 indicators, most importantly state level data (i.e. hospitalization databases, workers' compensation).

We also discussed the importance of producing state occupational health indicator reports and making those reports available publically, for others within the state who may not know that the data is available and to help provide data for continued research. Three examples of state indicator reports were made available to participants of the breakout session.