

Injury

The Florida Department of Health, Office of Injury Prevention (OIP) was formally established by Florida Statute in 2004. Its mission is to provide leadership to public and private partners dedicated to reducing Florida's injury burden. The OIP staff currently consists of 6 full-time professional staff. In 2003, OIP and its injury prevention stakeholders statewide developed the 2004-2008 Florida Injury Prevention Strategic Plan, a 5-year road map for injury prevention activities in the state. A 13-member Florida Injury Prevention Advisory Council (FIPAC) and Goal Teams corresponding to each goal in the Strategic Plan were appointed in 2005 to assist OIP in implementing the Strategic Plan, and began meeting semi-annually in June 2005. In September 2005, OIP hosted a State Technical Assessment Team (STAT) visit by the State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors Association (STIPDA), a peer review of OIP's programs conducted by injury prevention professionals from other states. OIP is one of 30 state injury prevention programs funded by the Public Health Injury Surveillance and Prevention Program grant from CDC, which OIP is using to fund the semi-annual FIPAC and Goal Team meetings, implement the 2004-2008 Florida Injury Prevention Strategic Plan, and strengthen injury surveillance in the state. In October 2007, FIPAC met to begin planning for the 2009-2013 Florida Injury Prevention Strategic Plan.

Under the guidance of the primary and secondary mentors, the CDC/CSTE Fellow will have a substantial hands-on opportunity to support the injury surveillance activities required by the Strategic Plan and the CDC grant. The Fellow will assist in the preparation of monthly injury fact sheets by conducting data analyses and interpreting the data on specific causes of injury morbidity and mortality among Florida residents. The Fellow will also assist with the development of an improved data dissemination model for injury analyses. The Fellow will be assigned to Goal Team 6 of the Strategic Plan, which concerns data, surveillance and epidemiology issues in injury prevention. The Fellow will also be given the opportunity to present annual updates of injury surveillance data at the semi-annual FIPAC and Goal Team meetings.

Opportunities will be given to the Fellow to participate in special projects of the OIP as they occur. Past examples include an investigation of deaths by hanging as a potential suicide cluster in 2005, and surveillance of unintentional drownings among children for a drowning prevention campaign in 2006. Potential future projects include topics of elderly falls, prescription drug abuse, suicide and anti-depressants, drowning prevention best practices, and researching the feasibility of implementing the National Violent Death Reporting System. The Fellow will also be given the opportunity to interact with stakeholders and the public by responding to requests for ad hoc analyses of injury surveillance data and other inquiries.

Consistent with the aims of the CDC/CSTE Fellowship Program, in-service training opportunities will be made available to the Fellow. The Fellow will be given the opportunity to attend the highly esteemed, week-long Principles and Practice of Injury Prevention Summer Institute at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Opportunities to participate in online "Webinars" hosted by the University of Pittsburgh's

Center for Injury Research and Control and other institutions will be offered to the Fellow. Depending on the Fellow's interests and background, opportunities may be available for the Fellow to present guest lectures in Master's of Public Health courses at Florida State University.

Opportunities for program or surveillance system evaluation within OIP are abundant. The Florida Injury Surveillance Data System (ISDS) is a collection of approximately 11 data sources recommended by STIPDA for use in surveillance of injury incidence and risk factors. These data sources include death certificate data, hospital discharge data, emergency department data, and motor vehicle crash data. Other data sources that will become available for injury surveillance in the near future include the Florida Trauma Registry and Florida's new EMS data system, EMSTARS, which is scheduled to go live in July 2008. Each data source, as well as the entire ISDS, may be evaluated according to CDC's "Updated Guidelines for Evaluating Public Health Surveillance Systems: Recommendations from the Guidelines Working Group" (MMWR 2001;50[No. RR-13]). Program areas within OIP, including the Florida Bicycle Helmet Promotion Program, Florida Special Needs Occupant Protection Program, and Safe Kids, as well as the impact of state laws such as the Residential Swimming Pool Safety Act on the incidence of injuries, may also be evaluated according to CDC's "Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health" (MMWR 1999;48[No. RR-11]).

A memorandum of understanding exists between OIP and the Florida Department of Health's Office of Public Health Preparedness as required by the CDC grant. All employees and contractors of the Florida Department of Health, including the Fellow, will be expected to perform other duties as assigned and follow a pre-determined Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. As the opportunity arises, the Fellow may also participate in disaster epidemiology "strike teams" in the aftermath of such an event.

Assignment Location: Tallahassee, FL

Primary Mentor: Alan Rowan, DrPH, MPA
Division Director

Advanced Degree: Dr.P.H., University of Alabama (2002)
MPA, Florida State University (1998)

Secondary Mentor: Kyla Shelton, MPH
Biological Scientist IV and Injury Epidemiologist

Advanced Degree: MPH, University of South Florida (2006)