

TO: CSTE National Office
FROM: Mel Kohn
DATE: 9/1/04
RE: Report for trip to STIPDA meeting

I attended the Annual Meeting of the State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors' Association (STIPDA) as a CSTE representative. The meeting took place from August 29-September 1, 2004 in Park City, Utah, although I was only able to attend until the morning of August 31.

On the first day of the meeting I participated in a meeting of the STIPDA policy committee, which was in large part informed by Sue Gallagher. Although Sue is a longtime STIPDA member and injury prevention researcher/advocate, she is currently a Robert Wood Johnson fellow in Sen. Durbin's office on the Hill. Sue noted that we have a great deal of work to do, since injury and violence prevention are not on the radar for most legislators, and consequently there is little expertise in this area among legislative staff (not to mention a lack of appropriation activity). She discussed how business is conducted on the Hill, emphasizing that meeting with legislative staff is the key to moving initiatives forward. I think much of this information will be helpful to CSTE as we work with legislators.

The next day I presented a CSTE update to the conference attendees. At the beginning of my presentation I asked how many of the states represented had regular contact with their State Epidemiologist, and only a small number (<10) of audience members raised their hands. I described the history of CSTE and that our mission is promoting excellence and capacity in epidemiology and surveillance across subject areas. I discussed our involvement in the four generations of the Injury Surveillance Workgroup, and the development of injury indicators. I also described the NEDSS assessment project that we are working on with NCIPC (related to the NVDRS PAM), and the Survey we did in collaboration with STIPDA about external cause of injury coding. Finally I described the injury sessions at this year's CSTE Annual Meeting, and encouraged people to work with their State Epidemiologist, and to attend the CSTE meeting next year.

Among the other sessions I attended, one on time and office management was particularly interesting. I've suggested to the Annual Meeting Program Committee that we consider putting together a similar session at the CSTE Meeting.

One of the most useful things about attending meetings like this is the opportunity to meet people working in this field. One person I met at this meeting whom I had not had an opportunity to meet before was the chief policy person for NCIPC, Pam Protzel-Berman. Among other things we discussed the CDC Futures Initiative, and I expressed to her my concern about injury getting submerged in the new organizational structure. She indicated an interest in having CSTE representation at some upcoming meetings related to injury surveillance. I told her to feel free to let me know what they need and I would bring that request back to CSTE.

I also put forward a resolution which asks NCIPC to explore the possibility of getting other agencies, such as the Medicare program, to mandate external cause of injury coding in order for them to process reimbursement claims. If they do so this has the potential to greatly improve the frequency and quality of external cause coding. Because I left before the Business Meeting I do not know if the resolution passed, but if it did CSTE will be asked to sign on as well.

Thanks for the opportunity to represent CSTE to this important partner. I look forward to other opportunities to build links with STIPDA and promote injury epidemiology and surveillance through CSTE's work.