

UC Irvine

Western Journal of Emergency Medicine: Integrating Emergency Care with Population Health

Title

Using a Multidisciplinary Approach for a Multi-faceted Public Health Problem

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/47m705bs>

Journal

Western Journal of Emergency Medicine: Integrating Emergency Care with Population Health, 14(4)

ISSN

1936-900X

Authors

Houry, Debra
Swahn, Monica
Hankin-Wei, Abigail

Publication Date

2013

DOI

10.5811/westjem.2013.3.16333

Copyright Information

Copyright 2013 by the author(s). This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License, available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

Peer reviewed

Using a Multidisciplinary Approach for a Multi-faceted Public Health Problem

Debra Houry, MD, MPH*
Monica H. Swahn, PhD, MPH†
Abigail Hankin, MD, MPH*

* Emory University, Department of Emergency Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia

† Georgia State University, School of Public Health, Atlanta, Georgia

Supervising Section Editor: Debra Houry, MD, MPH

Submission history: Submitted March 13, 2013; Revision received March 14, 2013; Accepted March 20, 2013

Full text available through open access at http://escholarship.org/uc/uciem_westjem

DOI: 10.5811/westjem.2013.3.16333

[West J Emerg Med. 2013;14(4):301–302.]

The Emory Center for Injury Control is a multi-university consortium dedicated to studying and preventing unintentional injuries and violence. A major goal of our Center is to transcend academic boundaries and disciplines to connect research to practice. As such, we are focusing our fourth special *Western Journal of Emergency Medicine* issue on multidisciplinary research.

In particular, this thematic issue provides innovative strategies for strengthening new research and adopting new practices that better incorporate injury prevention. For example, one study addresses the need to provide violence prevention strategies in trauma centers, underscoring how many of the youth seen in emergency departments are at increased risk for violence.¹ Similarly, there is a need to incorporate protection of vulnerable populations using new strategies and in broader settings. Self-Brown et al² make a case for including child maltreatment as part of broader disaster planning, and Strasser³ suggests that we address elder mistreatment through screening in legal assistance settings.

This issue contains research spanning the lifespan and in varied populations. For example, one study assesses the rates of intimate partner violence (IPV) among men who identify as gay or bisexual, as well as their perceptions of police helpfulness and next steps given their potential need for legal protection,⁴ while another study assesses individual relationship factors that modulate risk of IPV among men in a same-sex relationship.⁵ Goldammer et al⁶ focused on a younger population, investigating factors that influence the probability that a middle or high school student will intervene in a bullying situation, research that lays the groundwork for the development of effective bullying prevention programs. Also focusing on the adolescent population, a qualitative study by Kruger et al⁷ describes the perspectives of young girls at risk for sexual exploitation, including their experiences with building trusting relationships, peer aggression, sexuality, and sexual commodification in the world around them. Another study, by Barlament et al⁸, focuses on unintentional injury

prevention among adolescents, and highlights the disparity in seatbelt use among teens in rural areas, making a case for interventions that address this problem.

With respect to increasing the resources for violence prevention, one of the most powerful arguments we can make highlights the costs of violence to individuals and to our society at large. Roldós et al⁹ assess the economic burden of IPV in Ecuador and make a powerful argument against the asymmetry of the costs of violence versus the government resources allocated to this issue.

Finally, the editorial by Guedes¹⁰ makes a compelling case for integrating different forms of violence in research and practice; in particular the authors address the intersection between child maltreatment and IPV and provide a framework accompanying their key points. Similarly, the manuscript by Swahn et al¹¹ focuses on high school students, and examines the overlapping risk factors for violence against others with violence against oneself, as well as the overlap between violence and another important risk behavior – early alcohol-use initiation. These manuscripts point to a critical frontier in violence and injury research: the development of an understanding of how distinct forms of violence overlap and potentiate one another.

The research findings in this issue move the field of violence and injury research forward, using a multidisciplinary approach to develop an understanding of violence and injury prevention across the entire spectrum of human development.

Address for Correspondence: Debra Houry, MD, MPH. Emory University, Department of Emergency Medicine, 531 Asbury Circle, Annex Building, Suite N340, Atlanta, GA 30322. Email: dhoury@emory.edu.

Conflicts of Interest: By the WestJEM article submission agreement, all authors are required to disclose all affiliations, funding sources, and financial or management relationships that could be perceived as potential sources of bias. This work was funded by CDC grant 5R49CE001494. The authors disclosed no other conflicts of interest.

REFERENCES

1. Hankin A, Meagley B, Wei SC, et al. Prevalence of Exposure to Risk Factors for Violence Among Young Adults Seen in an Inner-City Emergency Department. *West J Emerg Med.* 2013;14(4):303-308.
2. Self-Brown S, Anderson P, Edwards S, et al. Child Maltreatment and Disaster Prevention: Qualitative Study of Community Agency Perspectives. *West J Emerg Med.* 2013;14(4):401-407.
3. Strasser SM, Weaver S, Smith M, et al. Screening for Elder Mistreatment among Older Adults Seeking Legal Assistance Services. *West J Emerg Med.* 2013;14(4):309-315.
4. Finneran C, Stephenson R. Gay and Bisexual Men's Perceptions of Police Helpfulness in Response to Male-Male Intimate Partner Violence. *West J Emerg Med.* 2013;14(4):354-362.
5. Stephenson R, Sata KN, Finneran C. Dyadic, Partner, and Social Network influences on Intimate Partner Violence among Male-Male Couples. *West J Emerg Med.* 2013;14(4):316-323.
6. Goldammer L, Swahn MH, Strasser SM, et al. An Examination of Bullying in Georgia Schools: Demographic and School Climate Factors Associated with Willingness to Intervene in Bullying Situations. *West J Emerg Med.* 2013;14(4):324-328.
7. Kruger A, Harper E, Harris P, et al. Sexualized and Dangerous Relationships: Listening to the Voices of Low-Income African American Girls Placed at Risk for Sexual Exploitation. *West J Emerg Med.* 2013;14(4):370-376.
8. Davidson S, Barlament J, Dawson L, et al. Metrics for Local Community Planning and Evaluation: The Case for Observational Measurement of High Risk Rural Sub-Populations in Occupant Safety. *West J Emerg Med.* 2013;14(4):380-382.
9. Roldós MI, Corso P. The Economic Burden of Intimate Partner Violence in Ecuador: Setting the Agenda for Future Research and Violence Prevention Policies. *West J Emerg Med.* 2013;14(4):347-353.
10. Guedes A, Mikton C. Examining the Intersections between Child Maltreatment and Intimate Partner Violence. *West J Emerg Med.* 2013;14(4):377-379.
11. Swahn MH, Bossarte RM, Palmier JB, et al. Co-Occurring Physical Fighting and Suicide Attempts among U.S. High School Students: Examining Patterns of Early Alcohol Use Initiation and Current Levels of Alcohol Use. *West J Emerg Med.* 2013;14(4):341-346.