

Injury Causation Database – June 2009 update

During 2008, RoSPA, ESC and Intertek commissioned research into the feasibility of replacing the Home and Leisure Accident Surveillance Systems (HASS/LASS). The outcome of this research is freely available as a report via the RoSPA website at http://www.rospa.com/hassandlass/update_june08.pdf

This report was presented to the then Secretary of State for Health, Alan Johnson. A key recommendation was to carry out detailed research into the practicalities and value of various data collection methods in busy Accident & Emergency (A&E) departments.

As a result of this presentation, we are delighted to report that the Department for Health has commissioned the South West Public Health Observatory (SWPHO) to carry out this research.

This more detailed phase of the project will take 12 months and it will present its findings in April 2010.

The SWPHO team will use established best practise in the form of the European Union Injury Database (EUIDB) and Professor Ronan Lyons' All Wales Injury Surveillance System (AWISS) to create systems that will allow A&E receptionists to collect injury causation data when patients arrive in the A&E department.

A representative sample of these patients will then be interviewed by qualified staff, to collect more detail regarding the precise circumstances of the injury – where did it happen, what was the person doing at the time, what object(s) was/were involved, what other people etc. In addition, SWPHO may also be able to set up touch-screen systems to allow patients to fill in their own record on a “DIY” basis.

Considerable emphasis will be placed on ensuring patient confidentiality throughout this data collection project.

3 hospital A&E departments will be involved: Aintree (Liverpool) St Mary's (London) and the RD&E (Exeter). These A&E departments are lead by medical consultants who are members of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine. These consultants and their teams are keen to use the causation data for research purposes, working with the local media, publishing articles in medical journals and most importantly, because they would like to help prevent accidental injuries while still continuing to deal with the consequences of accidents.

In the meantime, the sponsors of the original research (RoSPA, ESC and Intertek) intend to keep in touch with a diverse range of stakeholders ranging from politicians and insurers to healthcare providers and accident prevention practitioners.

A key challenge for all stakeholders will be to evaluate the value of the new injury causation data against the known costs of data collection.

For any more information regarding injury causation data, feel free to contact RoSPA's Information Centre via <http://www.rospa.com/infocentre/index.htm>

