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## Keeping fall prevention on the radar screen

The planning committee for the Multidisciplinary Fall Prevention Conference 2009, is pleased to invite injury prevention stakeholders to "Keeping Fall Prevention on the Radar Screen", the first of hopefully further conferences on fall prevention.

This meeting is being generously supported by the Brenda Strafford Foundation Chair in Geriatric Medicine, University of Calgary and grew out of the activities of the Calgary Region Falls Prevention Program.

Participants will hear about best practices and emerging research in fall prevention for older adults and have the opportunity to make connections with those also interested in this important seniors' health topic.

The conference will be of interest to the various health care disciplines providing care to seniors no matter where they work or in what sector.

At the conference participants will explore the possibility of establishing a consortium of practitioners, researchers, and administrators in the Western Provinces focusing on various aspects of fall prevention for older individuals. State

of the art presentations will cover best practices in the field of fall prevention and show how to turn the potential of prevention into a reality.

Learning objectives for the conference include:

1. To raise the profile of fall prevention activity within Alberta Health Services - Calgary Zone and Western Canada.
2. To share information about available approaches and services to improve knowledge of participants regarding fall prevention.
3. To learn from fall prevention initiatives across Alberta and Western Canada.
4. To provide an opportunity for informal networking and the creation of collaborative ventures in the field of fall prevention.

The conference will take place on April 16, 2009 starting at 7:30 AM at Mount Royal Conference Centre located at 4825 Mount Royal Gate SW.

For more information, phone 403-292-9330, email [janet.schimmel@janpat.com](mailto:janet.schimmel@janpat.com) or visit [www.calgaryfallprevention.ca](http://www.calgaryfallprevention.ca).

## Edmonton's International Conference on Urban Traffic Safety

Join over 17 international experts March 16-18 for a conference hosted by Edmonton's Office of Traffic Safety, Transportation Department, The City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Police Commission.

This conference is designed for participants to: Apply global expertise to local traffic safety problems; Initiate a dialogue with traffic safety stakeholders regarding the value and processes of evidence based decision making, community mobilization and an integrated approach; Raise awareness of traffic safety problems in our

communities; Offer practical community-based solutions to traffic safety problems, and; Provide an opportunity for traffic safety stakeholders to network and establish relationships.

This conference is for law enforcement, engineering, legal professionals, community partners, academics and researchers, and students interested in the latest traffic safety strategies.

Registration is now open. For more information, visit [www.trafficsafetyconference.com](http://www.trafficsafetyconference.com).

## Updates, news and resources

### **ACICR welcomes new staff!**

Welcome to Allan Beaver, Bev Littlechilds, Kevin Brandvold, Sharon Anderson, Tammy White Quills-Knife and Warren Letendre. They are the newest regional traffic safety coordinators working with communities to address local and regional traffic safety issues.

Allan Beaver – Treaty 8 First Nations Region, 780-868-9471 or [allan.beaver@gov.ab.ca](mailto:allan.beaver@gov.ab.ca).

Bev Littlechilds – Eastern Métis Settlements Region, 780-404-5206 or [bev.littlechilds@gov.ab.ca](mailto:bev.littlechilds@gov.ab.ca).

Kevin Brandvold – Region 1, 403-308-8297 or [kevin.brandvold@gov.ab.ca](mailto:kevin.brandvold@gov.ab.ca).

Sharon Anderson – Western Métis Settlements Region, 780-805-1824 or [sharon.f.anderson@gov.ab.ca](mailto:sharon.f.anderson@gov.ab.ca).

Tammy White Quills-Knife – Treaty 7 First Nations Region, 403-863-2417 or [tammy.wq-knife@gov.ab.ca](mailto:tammy.wq-knife@gov.ab.ca).

Warren Letendre – Treaty 6 First Nations Region, 780-690-0737 or [warren.letendre@gov.ab.ca](mailto:warren.letendre@gov.ab.ca).

### **Calling for a national children's injury prevention strategy**

Today's Parent and Safe Kids Canada are urging the federal government to develop and fund a five-year national strategy for injury prevention in children and youth. For more information, visit [www.todayparent.com/healthykids/article.jsp?content=20081123\\_195746\\_15160&page=1](http://www.todayparent.com/healthykids/article.jsp?content=20081123_195746_15160&page=1).

## **Keeping kids safe in cars: Child passenger safety promotion in Aboriginal communities**

By Shawn Feely, Program Director, IMPACT the Injury Prevention Centre of Children's Hospital

Since 1999, IMPACT and the Manitoba First Nations Community Wellness Working Group and their partners have been addressing the burden of injuries in First Nations Communities.

In the past few years three communities have participated in the Community Injury Prevention Demonstration Project. This involves organizing a community advisory committee; implementing an injury surveillance system; and selecting, delivering and evaluating injury prevention programming based on priorities identified by the community. Each participating community has identified priorities based on available injury data and their particular needs. All three communities have selected the reduction of injuries due to motor vehicle collisions as a priority.

The Working Group partnered with Grand Rapids First Nation, Sandy Bay First Nation, Tootinawaziibeeng First Nation, First Nations and Inuit Health, Health Canada, and Transport Canada on the delivery of this project.

### **The Problem**

Motor vehicle collisions cost Canadians approximately \$1.67 billion dollars each year and are an important cause of childhood injury, mortality and morbidity. They are the 4th leading cause of injury hospitalization among Canadian children 1-14 years of age. Head injuries are the most common cause of morbidity and mortality in serious motor vehicle collisions. Many

motor vehicle-related head injuries to children could be prevented with the proper use of child restraint systems. When used correctly, child restraint systems are effective and can reduce the risk of death and serious injury by 70 per cent.

### **Project Description**

This demonstration project assessed current child passenger safety practices in three Manitoba First Nations communities, investigated local community understanding and barriers to proper and consistent use of child restraint systems, and implemented and evaluated a promotional strategy in these communities. Individuals from each community were trained as car seat technicians and provided assistance and education to their own community members. Car seat were made available at low cost or provided free to community members.

### **Project Results**

There was a dramatic increase in the use of child car seats in the target age group. The Working Group, the participating communities and other partners all view the program as being positive. The results and experiences of the project are being shared with other communities. The project is currently being expanded to 7 more communities.

For more information, email [sfeely1@mts.net](mailto:sfeely1@mts.net) or phone 204-787-1823.

## A Widow's Awakening

By Maryanne Pope

On September 29th, 2000, Cst. John Petropoulos of the Calgary Police Service responded to a break and enter complaint at a warehouse. The security alarm had gone off, so it was thought there was an intruder in the building. John was investigating the mezzanine level when he stepped over some wires and fell through a false ceiling. There was no safety railing in place to warn him – or anyone else – of the danger. At the age of 32, he succumbed to brain injuries. The alarm turned out to be false; there was no intruder in the building.

After his death, John's police recruit classmates started the John Petropoulos Memorial Fund (JPMF) with the purpose of raising public awareness about the importance of workplace safety for emergency services personnel. When communities work together, risks to these workers can be minimized. Through the *One, Is One Too Many* campaign, the Fund gives the public practical tips that people can implement to help make sure emergency workers make it home safely after every shift. I know firsthand the importance of this because John was my husband. I work closely with the JPMF to help ensure that other people don't have to experience what I – and John – did.

The JPMF's key educational tools are two 30-second public service announcements (PSAs). The first PSA, entitled *Make Your Workplace Safe for Everyone*, is about building safety and uses John's death as a powerful example of why workplaces need to be safe for anyone who might be on the premises. The second PSA is entitled *SLOW DOWN: It's No Picnic Out Here* and educates motorists about the need to slow down when passing emergency services personnel working on the road.

The JPMF is now producing a 7 minute safety video (and 3 additional PSAs) entitled *Put Yourself in Our Boots* which will inform employers, building managers, safety coordinators and others about why and how to make their workplace safe for everyone, including emergency services personnel who may have to respond.

Just as John's life-long dream was to become a police officer, mine was to become a writer. The day before John passed away, we'd had an argument about me not making writing a priority in my life. I'd said to him how scared I was to wake up twenty years later and still not have finished writing a book. He'd looked at me and said, "You're probably right – as long as you know that will have been your choice." Then he went to work and died as the result of a preventable fall at an unsafe workplace.

Two weeks later I started writing what would become my first book, *A Widow's Awakening*. Written in the style of creative non-fiction, it is a candid portrayal of how I came to terms with John's death. It took me eight years to finish and along the way, I learned how to write short stories, play scripts and screenplays and how to become a public speaker. I also started my own production company, (that produced a documentary about the 'to be or not to be...a mom?' decision and I am the Board Chair of the JPMF.)

I have learned to love my new life and have found peace with John's death – but it is not a journey I would wish upon anyone.

For information on the JPMF, visit [www.jpmpf.ca](http://www.jpmpf.ca).

## CALENDAR

### Canadian Agricultural Safety Week

Canadian Federation of Agriculture  
March 11-17, 2009  
Phone: 613-731-7321  
Website: [www.cfa-fca.ca](http://www.cfa-fca.ca)

### National Farm Safety Week

Canada Safety Council  
March 14-20, 2009  
Phone: 613-739-1535  
Website: [www.safety-council.org](http://www.safety-council.org)

### Poison Prevention Week

Poison & Drug Information Services  
March 15-21, 2009  
Phone: 403-944-6900  
Website: [www.padis.ca](http://www.padis.ca)

### Edmonton's International Conference on Urban Traffic Safety

March 16-18, 2009  
Edmonton, AB  
Website: [www.TrafficSafetyConference.com](http://www.TrafficSafetyConference.com)

### Western Conference on Safety

April 6-7, 2009  
Vancouver, BC  
Phone: 604-233-1842  
Website: [www.pacificsafetycenter.com](http://www.pacificsafetycenter.com)

### Interdisciplinary Fall Prevention Conference 2009: Keeping Fall Prevention on the Radar

April 16, 2009  
Calgary, AB  
Phone: 403-292-9330  
Email: [janet.schimmel@janpat.com](mailto:janet.schimmel@janpat.com)  
Website: [www.calgaryfallprevention.ca](http://www.calgaryfallprevention.ca)

### Physical & Health Education Conference

April 30-May 2, 2009  
Banff, AB  
Phone: 613-523-1348 or 1-800-663-8708  
Email: [banff09@phecanada.ca](mailto:banff09@phecanada.ca)  
Website: [www.phecanada.ca/Banff09/e/general\\_info.cfm](http://www.phecanada.ca/Banff09/e/general_info.cfm)

From 1986 to 2006 on average there was one hot substance-related death per year. Due to the small numbers reporting is limited.

From 1993 to 2006 the hot substance-related hospital admission rates decreased an average 7.99 per cent annually. On average there were 207 hot substance-related admissions. Males accounted for 61 per cent of the admissions. Young children (less than 4 years of age) and seniors (those greater than 65 years of age) had the highest admission rates. For the most of the age groups, males had higher rates than females.

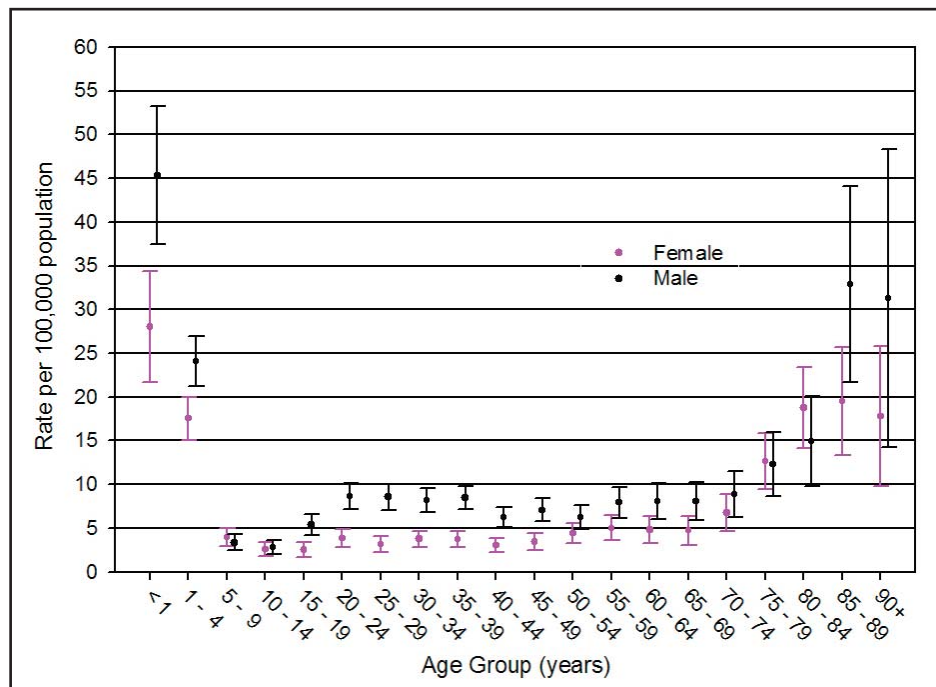
There were two distinct trends for emergency department visit rates. The first trend from 1998 to 2001 was an average annual increase of 0.73 per cent. The second trend from 2002 to 2006 was an annual decrease of 6.45 per cent. These two trends are most likely due to the change in the data collection systems. On average there were 4,902 hot substance-related emergency department visits. Males accounted for 54 per cent of the visits. Young children less than 4 years of age had the highest rates. Boys in these age groups had rates much higher than girls in these same age groups.

For every hot substance-related death, there were 121 admissions and 3,677 emergency department visits.

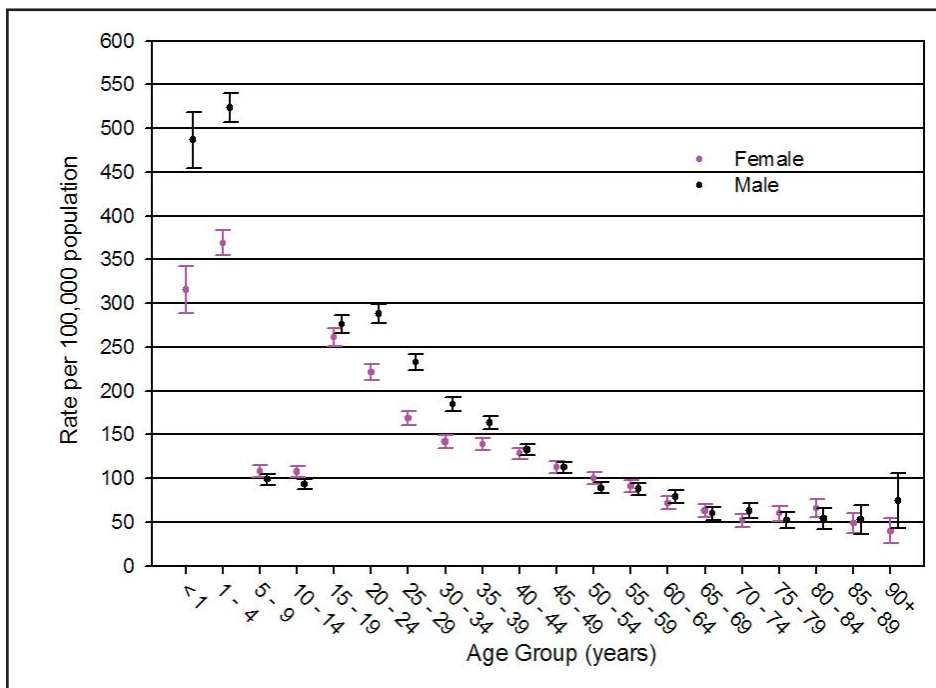
Source: Alberta Centre for Injury Control & Research, Edmonton. Database held by Alberta Centre of Injury Control & Research (data accessed November 2008 database, unpublished, data available upon request).

## Hot substance-related deaths and injuries, Alberta, 1986-2006

### Hospital Admissions



### Emergency Department Visits



ICD-9CM Codes: E924.0-E924.9; ICD-10CA Codes: X10-X16, X18, X19

Hot substances include: contact with hot drinks, food, fats and cooking oils, hot tap-water, other hot fluids, steam/hot vapours, hot air/gases, hot household appliances/radiators/pipes, other hot metals and other and unspecified heat and hot substances.