



News Release

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Utah to Receive CDC Violence and Injury Prevention Funding

(Salt Lake City, UT) – The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) will receive a financial boost in its efforts to reduce the number of Utahns who die from violence and injury.

The department's Violence and Injury Prevention Program was awarded \$220,000 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to support its prevention efforts, UDOH Executive Director Dr. David N. Sundwall announced today. The funding will help Utah strengthen programs and activities and enhance the state's injury tracking capabilities.

“We are very pleased to receive this award to support our existing programs and information gathering capabilities in Utah,” Dr. Sundwall said. “In light of federal funding cuts among many other health programs, the fact that Utah received this award in a highly competitive grant process is a testament to our hard work in injury and violence prevention.”

UDOH data show that in 2003, 1,300 Utahns died from injuries suffered in events like motor vehicle crashes and falls, and intentional injuries, including homicide and suicide. Another 10,000 Utahns were hospitalized and 180,000 were seen in emergency departments for injuries.

In addition to infrastructure support, the award will help Utah strengthen its injury prevention planning coalition with partners from academic, nonprofit, local government, private, and professional organizations dedicated to reducing injury and violence.

“Continuing to build on our progress, gain new knowledge, and reach out to our community partners is vital for achieving our goals of making our families and children safer and healthier,” said Sundwall.

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The funds will also support Utah’s ability to collect and analyze information about injury and violence from centralized electronic hospital and vital statistics data. Information about motor vehicle injuries, drownings, burns, poisonings, homicides and suicides will be collected and analyzed to direct future prevention plans.

The award also continues to support efforts to gather information about the incidence of traumatic brain injury (TBI) in Utah using statewide hospital discharge data. Caused by a blow or jolt to the head, TBI causes devastating, long-term disability or death for the more than 1,800 Utahns who sustain them each year.

“We know that the majority of injuries and disability can be prevented and we can save lives. These grants are just one vital way we are supporting states so they can develop effective injury and violence prevention plans and programs for their communities.” said Dr. Ileana Arias, director of the CDC’s National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (CDC Injury Center). “Change can happen when we unite and share our commitment to reduce the pain and suffering caused by injuries and violence.”

Injury is the leading killer of all Utahns ages one to 44. Deaths and injuries from causes including car crashes, fire, homicide, suicide, child abuse, intimate partner violence and falls affect more than 5.5 million people each year, according to CDC data. In addition, injuries represent a substantial burden on our health care system and are responsible for more than 10 percent of all medical expense, or \$117 billion annually.

Information about injury and violence prevention and control data, programs and activities, as well as information about traumatic brain injury, can be found at www.health.utah.gov/vipp and www.cdc.gov/injury.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.