Saving Lives Together

In this Edition

December 2019
Greetings from the Staff

Hello, my name is Nanette Richards, and I am the Financial Liaison for the National Center for Fatality Review and Prevention. In that role, I execute contracts with our partners, and coordinate travel for our staff and those we support to attend regional meetings and trainings. I have worked at the National Center for 4 1/2 years, but I have been with our larger Michigan Public Health Institute for 9 years now.

I am grateful to say that I enjoy my job and the people I work with. One of my favorite parts of my work at the National Center is being able to support my coworkers. It is gratifying to know that the work we do here at the National Center supports yours on state and local teams. It is our goal to be responsive and to provide resources that help you do your job more effectively. We know that your important work in Child Death Review (CDR) and Fetal and Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) helps saves lives, and it's a privilege to be a part of that in even a small way.
As we head into the holiday season, it is our hope that you are able to enjoy some restful days and reflect with gratitude on the beauty around you. When we consider what we are grateful for at the National Center, local and state fatality review professionals are at the top of that list. Please reach out to us at info@nctrp.org if there is anything we can do to support your work.

Thank you for all you do,

Nanette Richards

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**Upcoming Events**

**January FIMR Regional Technical Assistance and Support Calls**

**WESTERN Region**: January 8, 2020, 4pm-5pm EST— including CA, UT, WY, MT, NV

**NORTHERN Region**: January 21, 2020, 9:30am-10:30 am EST— including WV, PA, NJ, DE, MD, ME and DC.

**MIDWEST Region**: January 21, 2020, 11am-12 noon, EST— including MI, WI, OH, IL, and IN.

**SOUTHERN Region**: January 23, 2020, 11am-12 noon EST, including KY, TN, MS, AL, and FL.

**CENTRAL Region**: January 27, 2020, 11am-12 noon EST— including CO, NE, KS, OK, TX, MO, LA.
WEBINAR

Effective Reviews of Congenital Anomalies

February 19, 2020, 2pm-3pm EST
Speaker: Kelly S. Gibson, MD, Maternal Fetal Medicine,
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology,
Metro Health System, Cleveland, OH

FIMR State Coordinator’s Conference Call

March 4, 2020, 3pm-4pm EST

2020 AMCHP Annual Conference
THE POWER OF CONNECTIONS: Building Equity for Healthy Generations.
March 21-24, Crystal Gateway Marriott
Crystal City, VA
Field Notes:

Updates from state & local teams

Colorado's Dashboard Creates Efficiency & Informs Prevention

The Colorado Child Fatality Prevention System (CFPS) has made its case review data available to local public health and prevention partners through the development of its CFPS Data Dashboard. The dashboard is an interactive data visualization platform that allows users to examine descriptive statistics of reviewed cases from 2009 to 2017. In addition to disseminating child fatality data, it helps the CFPS meet some of its statutorily-required reporting mandates.
The dashboard provides access to information that prevention and local partners need to inform their efforts. Users can examine leading causes of death, residential and rural vs. urban status, sex, age, overall numbers of deaths reviewed, as well as rates and selected circumstances surrounding the deaths. For SUID, circumstances of the investigation are available, as is sleep location, and adherence to American Academy of Pediatrics safe infant sleep recommendations. It is updated with another year's data annually on July 1st.

Andy Woster, epidemiologist and data visualization manager for the Violence and Injury Prevention-Mental Health Promotion Branch at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, designed the dashboard on the Tableau platform, launching it in April of 2018. Sasha Mintz, CFPS epidemiologist, says the dashboard has equipped partners to make informed choices when allocating their prevention dollars. "Folks can pull up the dashboard, filter down to their county(s) and/or population(s) of interest, and quickly obtain a snapshot of what infant, child, and youth deaths look like in that geography or group."

"We have also heard from other data users (e.g. internal partners, researchers, local media) that having the data available at their fingertips can quickly answer questions without having to complete a formal data request or send more emails than necessary," Mintz shared. The Dashboard has streamlined work in other ways as well. In Colorado, the CFPS is mandated to provide annual data reports to each of the state's 64 counties. The dashboard satisfies those reporting mandates. Mintz thinks the dashboard concept could benefit other state programs. "Other states may have similar language in their statutes and could save time on developing reports by having a dashboard available to any and all data users."
FIMR sites commemorate Pregnancy and Infant Loss Month in October

For the past 16 years, the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Medical Center in BelAir, MD has partnered with the Harford County, MD FIMR program to coordinate a commemorative event for families who have experienced a pregnancy or infant loss within the last year. It is a celebration of those babies, regardless of how tiny or how long they lived. "These families often feel very alone in their grief—and we, as a society, still are not comfortable with infant death," says Judy Churn, coordinator of the Harford FIMR program. "It is the one chance for them to tell their stories and share precious pictures with others that do not judge them."

This year’s memorial service was held on Oct. 5, 2019. Each family is asked to stand as their baby’s name is called, and they are given a "remembering bag." Items in the bag included a journal, angel wing ornament, an angel wing key chain, a packet of **forget me not** flower seeds, a candle, and a butterfly. Families can attach the butterfly to a lighted Butterfly Tree.

The FIMR program also provides them with the book "Dear Cheyenne," written from a bereaved parent’s perspective and offering insights to those experiencing the tragedy of losing a child. The hospital provides a large live mum plant to take home and hosts a dessert reception for the families to mingle. Judy Churn shared that fathers are often overlooked in traditional support groups and even the hospital setting, so she includes the poem, "A Father’s Grief" at the ceremony.

For more information on Harford’s commemorative event, contact Judy Churn at: judy.churn@maryland.gov. For additional resources on bereavement, visit the National Center’s website for our archived webinar: “Bereavement Support for Families and Professionals,” presented February 20, 2019. The webinar archive is located at: [https://www.nctrp.org/tools_and_resources/archived-webinars-presentations/](https://www.nctrp.org/tools_and_resources/archived-webinars-presentations/)
Kudos Corner

Hilliard Receives Covington Award

The National Center would like to congratulate Heidi Hilliard, Senior Program Advisor for the Michigan Child Death Review program, for being the 2019 recipient of the Theresa M. Covington Award for Excellence in Fatality Review. Abby Collier, Director of the National Center, presented Hilliard’s award on September 10th.

Heidi was nominated by fatality review colleagues to receive this award, acknowledging 23 years of dedicated service to the Michigan CDR program and working to make communities safer for children to grow and thrive. Congratulations, Heidi!

New Study on Sleep-Related Infant Deaths

The paper examines 171 cases of an infant dying with a u-shaped pillow in the sleep environment. Of those, 139 had been placed to sleep on top of the pillow, and 2 had the pillow placed around their heads. Of those 141 infants, 92% were under six months old, 58% were male, 53% were non-Hispanic White, 34% were born prior to 37 weeks gestation; and 47% had Medicaid insurance coverage.

A known risk factor for sleep-related infant deaths, soft objects or loose bedding of any kind should not be present in an infant’s sleep environment. The authors concluded that health care providers may want to include the appropriate use of u-shaped pillows in their safe sleep education information for new parents, and that caregivers of younger infants and preterm infants may be a particularly important target population for those messages.

Congratulations to the authors!

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**Data Matters**

![Coming Soon](image_url)
Changes to the NFR-CRS Expected Spring 2020

An update to the National Fatality Review-Case Reporting System (NFR-CRS) is expected in Spring 2020. Some of the major highlights include:

- **Improved reporting about the use of tobacco/nicotine products** by decedent and biological mother in infant cases
- **Simplification of Section L**—Prevention with a focus on positive and negative findings in the case
- **Revised reporting of Section I6**—Suicide with additional questions reflecting emerging trends in suicide research
- For FIMR users, **additional questions in section O2—FIMR Issues Summary with improved section readability and layout.**

Additional details will be shared as we get closer to the release date in 2020, so keep your eyes peeled!

Data Quality Corner
The 4th annual Data Quality Summary (DQS) Report for states participating with the National Fatality Review Case Reporting System (NFR-CRS) was e-mailed to state CDR Coordinators on Oct 31, 2019. This report included the states’ 2016 and 2017 data, as well as national data from 2017. We made several changes to the format of the report this year. These changes are the result of the Data Quality Workgroup efforts over the past year, as well as changes that were necessary to make the report consistent with Version 5 of the NFR-CRS, which was released in April 2018. The workgroup recommended changes to the report including:

- Enhance usability of the report
- Incorporate targets for CORE variables % missing and unknown
- Incorporate the addition of timeliness measures

A short, pre-recorded webinar more fully explains the specific changes, the content of each of the six tabs, and potential uses for the DQS. The webinar may be accessed here: [https://vimeo.com/369571739](https://vimeo.com/369571739). The access password is ‘Quality;’ use Firefox or Chrome web browsers for best results. Please contact your state coordinator or the National Center if you would like more information about the Data Quality summaries.

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**Resources for Prevention**

**Evidence-based Teen Dating Violence Prevention Model**

Is your fatality review team facing the sad reality of teen dating violence? If so, a new resource from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) may be a good option for your community. [Dating Matters®](https://www.cdc.gov/datingmatters/): *Strategies to Promote Healthy Teen Relationships* is a comprehensive teen dating violence prevention model developed by CDC to stop teen dating violence before it starts.
The toolkit is an evidence-based model that includes prevention strategies for individuals, peers, families, schools, and neighborhoods. It focuses on teaching 11-14 year olds healthy relationship skills before they start dating, and reducing behaviors that increase the risk for dating violence, including substance use and sexual risk-taking. CDC designed this resource for local health departments with access to schools, community partners, state and local government, and other public health resources, making it a natural fit for fatality review teams. Take a look and consider how Dating Matters may help prevent youth violence in your community.

National Center Webinar Library
The National Center’s archived webinars are a great resource for fatality review professionals. From cause-specific fatality and prevention, to partnering with state Maternal Child Health programs, to addressing vicarious trauma in team members, the topics address issues that impact team success.

In addition to the webinars, presentation slides and relevant publications are included, making the archive a well-rounded, practical learning tool. Take a look at the archive, and consider what topics may be most helpful for you or your team!

New and Departing Coordinators
WELCOME

- Renae Satterwhite, Tennessee State FIMR
- Somar Leal, FIMR Coordinator, Escambia County, FL
- Sebecha Dahal, FIMR Coordinator, Philadelphia, PA
- Sara Lewis, State CDR and FIMR Coordinator, Maryland
- Anne Watson, MFIMR Coordinator, ME
- Andrea Bookor, New Jersey FIMR
- Whitney Remy, FIMR Coordinator, Hamilton County, OH
- Olga Myers, FIMR Coordinator, Rock County, WI
- Lori Peters, FIMR Coordinator, Kenosha, WI
- Angela Thompson, State FIMR Coordinator, Florida
- Jackie Allard, Montana FICMMR
- Tiffany Webber, Montana FICMMR
- Jackie Bolster, Montana FICMMR

FAREWELL

- Theresa Chmiel, Escambia County, FL
- Thomas Boeshart, Hamilton County, OH
- Elizabeth Smith, Kenosha WI
- Amy Parry, Wisconsin CDR Program
- Ashlee Franzen, Racine, WI
- Mary Rosner, Marinette, WI
- Lorena Retana, Kenosha, WI
- Hillary Harrie, Rock County, WI
- Dianne Powell, Florida State FIMR
- Angie Allen, Montana FICMMR
- Katie Muhly, Montana FICMMR
Growth in Indiana!
Indiana has expanded its FIMR efforts statewide in the last quarter with the addition of 13 local teams. Please welcome Indiana’s new local FIMR coordinators: Jo Ann Spaulding, Gail Elbert, Jennifer Caffrey, Brittany Waggoner, Julie Teeter, Mary Wellnitz, Lori Terrell, Stephanie Brock, Angie Stinson, Rise Ratney, Debbie Gloyd, Christina Kellar, and Khala Hochstetler.

Staff Out & About
Meeting with our state and local partners is the best part of our job. This map highlights the places National Center staff provided technical assistance in the last quarter of 2019. Selected topics included:

- The NFR-CRS: Focus on Data Quality, a remote presentation for Ohio’s local teams
- Working with Special Populations for SUID/SDY Case Registry Grantees
- Strategic planning at Georgia’s Child Fatality Review Panel Meeting

The National Center is funded to be your one stop shop for all things related to your FIMR and CDR programs. Questions? Concerns? An exciting idea? We would love to hear from you! We are happy to work with your program to address your technical assistance or training needs.

Please reach out at info@ncfr.org if:

- You are interested in exploring training or technical support opportunities
- You would like to join the FIMR or CDR listserv
- You would like to subscribe to the National Center’s quarterly newsletter

Email the National Center
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