

North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force

MINUTES

From meeting October 25, 2017

Karen McLeod, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:05. She reminded members that the Executive Committee is seeking a co-chair for the Task Force after the departure of Buck Wilson and invited interested persons to step forward.

Self-introductions were made.

Attending in person: Karen McLeod, Kella Hatcher, Tawanda Foster, Martha Sue Hall, Alan Dellapenna, Cindy Bizzell, Vanessa Totten, Dana Magnum, Belinda Pettiford, Betsey Tilson, Marty McCaffrey, Jenny Kristiansen, Ben Matthews, Erin Wilson, Mary Williams Stover, Pamela Thompson, Tom Vitaglione, Erin McClain, Rep. Donna White, Sen. Joyce Krawiec, Michael Becketts, Elaine Cabinum-Foeller, Gerri Mattson, Karla Buitrago, Kym Martin, Kerry Robbins, Lisa Mayhew, Sally Herndon, April Harley, Daniel Findley, Michaela Penix, Peg O'Connell, Tiffany Gladney, Whitney Tucker, Matt Gross, Christy Coe, Seth Riggins, Andrea Lewis, Sky David, Steve Jarvis, Rep. Robert Reives, Tamara Barnes, Belinda Pettiford, Kelly Peterson, Morgan Jeter, Erin Wilson

On the phone: Susan Robinson, Senator Don Davis, Sarah Verbiest, Janice Freedman, Cara DeRounian, Sharon Rhyne

Karen McLeod asked for a moment of silence in honor the children who have died since the Task Force last met, and also to honor all the professionals who work to serve and protect them.

Martha Sue Hall made a motion that the minutes from the meeting on September 26 be accepted as written, Elaine Cabinum-Foeller seconded the motion. (Senator Don Davis asked that they be corrected to show that he called into that meeting.) Motion approved (as amended).

Karen McLeod reminded members to turn in the member acknowledgment form if they had not yet done so. She also reminded them that CFTF members are expected to participate in at least one committee, and that is where most of the substantive work of the CFTF happens. However, she acknowledged the recent challenges that legislative members have faced when last minute legislative activities conflict with Task Force committee meetings and that we understand those absences.

2016 North Carolina Infant Mortality Data – Dr. Stephanie Watkins, Epidemiologist, Women's and Children's Health Section, Division of Public Health – See presentation on CFTF website titled "CFTFIMR FALL2017 final"

Dr. Watkins presented the 2016 infant mortality data – the slides referenced in the presentation above provide the substance of this presentation (that information will not be reproduced here).

Discussion during and after the presentation touched on the following topics: data by perinatal care region for infants born substance exposed; policy change in 2011 related to infant deaths and those ruled undetermined by ME; fetal deaths and the association with environmental toxins; how the Perinatal Health Strategic Plan and targeted work in communities addresses social determinants of health and preconception health in particular, and how CFTF has had recommendations stemming from the PH Strategic Plan – there is a position posting for staff to lead this work for the PH Strategic Plan; how much of infant mortality stems from prematurity and the need to address the risks of prematurity.

Primary enforcement of rear seat restraints – Dr. Daniel Findley, Institute for Transportation Research and Education, NC State University – See presentation on CFTF website titled “RearSeatBelts ITRE 20170921”

Karen McLeod introduced Dr. Findley, and reminded CFTF members that this topic addresses a recommendation made by the CFTF for 2017 that was reflected in legislation proposed by Rep. Faircloth via HB 672, which did not pass in 2017 but is still eligible for consideration in 2018. [Current NC law requires all passengers to be properly restrained in the back seat, but lack of restraint in the back seat by those age 16 and up is not a justification for a traffic stop so that it is not a “standard” or “primary” enforcement offense; the CFTF recommended in 2017 that this be a primary enforcement offense for all ages.]

Dr. Findley provided some background on this issue and his research. He showed a video that illustrates the consequences of a lack of rear seat restraint in the event of a crash and cites statistics related to these consequences: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdW_3oQFO0c&feature=youtu.be. Dr. Findley presented data on rear seat passenger fatalities in states with and without standard enforcement, showing more fatalities in states without standard enforcement. He also showed data on the percentages of deaths for restrained versus unrestrained rear seat occupants in NC who were involved in a fatal crash between 2011 and 2015 with a breakdown by age groups. Dr. Findley explained the methodology used to evaluate the effect of standard enforcement, and the results estimating that standard enforcement would save about 14 lives annually in NC, resulting in \$130 million estimated economic savings.

Discussion after the presentation touched on the following: data related to injuries instead of deaths for this issue is not as reliable because a fatality in a crash elevates the investigation itself; the UD committee plans to add a link to this video to the fact sheet addressing the issue; when it comes to policy that can impact motor vehicle safety, this rear seat enforcement issue can have an impact; several members expressed the need for primary/standard enforcement.

Martha Sue Hall explained that the UD committee was recommending that this item from the 2017 CFTF Action Agenda stay on the 2018 agenda and that the CFTF support HB 672. Elaine Cabinum-Foeller seconded the motion, a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

2016 North Carolina Child Death Data – Kella Hatcher, Executive Director, NC Child Fatality Task Force – see presentation posted on CFTF website titled “child death data Hatcher 10-25-17”

Kella Hatcher explained that the CFTF is statutorily mandated to do a statistical study of child deaths, that data is one of the ways the CFTF identifies issues for study, and that most of the data in this presentation is from the State Center for Health Statistics. Graphs and charts addressing the following were presented (see online presentation for details): the trend in the child death rate since 1991; 2016 child death rates and trends by age groups; rates and trends by race/ethnicity; leading causes of child death. Infant deaths accounted for 64% of all child deaths in 2016 – additional details on infant mortality addressed in previous presentation. Examples of policy action addressing infant mortality were explained. Also presented: 2016 statistics on unintentional injury deaths as well as examples of policies to address them; 2016 statistics on suicide and homicide along with examples of policy actions to address intentional deaths; trends over time for selected causes of death; data and maps illustrating how NC compares to other states with child mortality; maps with child death rates by NC perinatal care regions.

Discussion during and/or following the presentation touched on: the fact that the CFTF has recently undertaken a deeper examination of the suicide data and this winter the ID committee will be doing a deeper examination of homicide data; more data on disparities is available through the Women’s Health Branch.

Sport injury surveillance and prevention – [Alan Dellapenna, filling in due to illness for Dr. Kristen Kucera, Assistant Professor, Department of Exercise and Sport Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and

Director of National Center for Catastrophic Sport Injury Research]—see presentation posted on CFTF website titled “CFTF Issue Catastrophic Sport Injuries 25Oct2017”

Alan Dellapenna explained that he was filling in for Dr. Kucera due to illness and using her slides, and that she had presented much of the following information to the Unintentional Death Prevention Committee, addressing an issue application submitted to the CFTF. He provided an explanation of sport-related catastrophic injury or illness. He explained the Consortium for Catastrophic Injury Monitoring in Sport (UNC Chapel Hill is part of this) along with surveillance methods/reporting for such injuries and the target populations of organized and sponsored sport participants. Data was presented illustrating aspects of injuries among NC sport participants (see presentation for details), along with case studies. North Carolina leads the nation in having the most comprehensive health and safety school policies, and part of the reason is the Gfeller-Waller law in NC. The objective of the CFTF issue application was to increase awareness, coordination, and collaboration between agencies and organizations at the state level to assist and inform surveillance and prevention efforts in this field. The Unintentional Death Prevention Committee is recommending to the full CFTF the following to be an administrative item on the 2018 CFTF Agenda:

***Administratively support** the work being done in North Carolina by the National Center for Sport Injury Research and the UNC Injury Prevention Research Center related to improving the reporting, prevention, and mitigation of sport-related catastrophic injuries and illnesses to children and youth. (Alan Dellapenna explained that this would have the CFTF assisting the efforts of the Injury and Violence Prevention Branch of the NC Division of Public Health to convene stakeholders and educate others about these issues, as the IVP Branch was already engaged in some of this type of work and was therefore an appropriate fit for taking the role of convener.)*

Karen McLeod called for a vote on this motion by the committee to approve this administrative item for the 2018 agenda. Motion was approved.

Alan Dellapenna also explained that at its next meeting, the Unintentional Death Prevention Committee would be looking at SB 302 from the 2017 session – this bill, which did not progress, was brought to the attention of the UD Committee by its sponsor, Senator Don Davis, because it addresses sports injury protocols for county/municipal recreational sports leagues, and the committee determined it wanted to examine the issue further at its next meeting.

Breastfeeding issues addressed by Perinatal Health Committee – Tom Vitaglione, Senior Fellow, NC Child

Tom Vitaglione explained that for years the CFTF has been looking at ways to increase breastfeeding because it decreases infant mortality. One CFTF strategy was to get Medicaid coverage of lactation services, which the CFTF has worked on since 2012 and finally achieved – the policy was published two months ago. He has expressed concern to DHHS that this took five years. Now NC Child, Moms Rising, and the NC Breastfeeding Coalition are seeking administrative support from the CFTF for their work talking to private insurers about the importance of covering these benefits the way Medicaid now does (such support may include, for example, a letter from the CFTF expressing its perspective on the importance of breastfeeding as it relates to infant health and wellness). This administrative item was approved by the Perinatal Health Committee, who now recommends this to the full CFTF for approval.

Karen McLeod called for a vote for the committee’s motion on this administrative item; motion approved.

Tom Vitaglione then explained the next breastfeeding recommendation from the Perinatal Health Committee. Most mothers work and need workplace accommodations for pregnancy and breastfeeding, and organizations collaborating to study this issue further were seeking administrative support from the CFTF for their work as follows:

Administratively support the work of the North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition, MomsRising, NC Child, and the Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute in their efforts to: examine ways in which pregnancy and lactation accommodations in the workplace can decrease infant mortality, increase child health and well-being, and address racial and socioeconomic health disparities; and research policies in place in other states that address these types of workplace accommodations.

(The type of CFTF support discussed by the PH committee included: providing an opportunity for researchers to update CFTF members on these issues by reporting back to the CFTF on any findings of a study or challenges faced in achieving the study goals; having CFTF representatives participate on an as-needed basis in this research; and providing letters of support and other types of endorsements according to the will of the Task Force.)

Karen McLeod called for a vote on this motion; motion approved.

Committee Updates

Intentional Death Prevention –Dr. Elaine Cabinum-Foeller

- Next meeting is November 8th, then February 6th
- Last meeting addressed opioids and child maltreatment, more detail on the Family Child Protection and Accountability Act, an update on the child welfare component of FAST, and a report back from the Paid Family Leave Insurance Advisory committee (to be addressed at the January meeting of the CFTF)
- Topics to be covered at next meeting:
 - Report back from two groups working on infant safe surrender
 - Data presentation from OCME related to infant homicides
 - Status and discussion of 2017 CFTF suicide prevention recommendations

Unintentional Death Prevention – Alan Dellapenna

- Next meeting is November 7th, then February 13th
- Last meeting addressed rear seat restraints, sports injuries, Operation Medicine Drop
- Topics to be covered at next meeting:
 - Firearm Safety Stakeholder Group report backs
 - CALM Group report back
 - Underage drinking
 - Discussion on SB 302 (per Senator Davis—as follow up to concussion topic at last meeting)

Perinatal Health – Belinda Pettiford

- Next meeting is November 1st, then January 24th
- Last meeting addressed pregnancy and lactation accommodations in the workplace, update on Medicaid coverage of lactation services, treating women for substance use disorder and their children, perinatal health funding
- Topics to be covered at next meeting:
 - Tobacco use prevention programs and funding that impacts perinatal health
 - Issue application from Perinatal Quality Collaborative NC
 - Infant mortality data

Director's Report – Kella Hatcher, Executive Director, NC Child Fatality Task Force

- Planning has continued for the Child Fatality Prevention System Event that will bring together all components of the system from across the state. The event will take place on April 9th and 10th at the McKimmon Center in Raleigh. Progress has been made on securing private funding, but more funding is

needed. A survey has been sent out to all in the system including CFTF members to aid in planning this event – those who have not yet taken the survey are urged to do so.

- Recent work since the last full CFTF meeting has included coordination of the CFTF committee meetings and leading or co-leading six CFTF-related work groups that are making reports back to the CFTF.
- Saturday is drug take-back day and information about take-back events and permanent drop boxes can be found on the Safe Kids NC website under Operation Medicine Drop.
- The next full CFTF meeting is January 17th.

Announcements

Karen McLeod announced that Benchmarks is hosting a private public partnership event this Friday.

Dana Mangum announced that the Domestic Violence Coalition is having a bi-annual conference May 22-24.

Cindy Bizzell announced that the NC GAL Program turns 35 in 2018 and there will be a big conference in July. A Governor's Crime Commission Grant is funding some much needed GAL staff.