

Child Fatality Task Force Meeting Minutes

Type of Meeting: Unintentional Death Prevention Committee		Date: November 19, 2018	
Facilitators: Alan Dellapenna, Martha Sue Hall		Time called to order: 10:02	Location: General Assembly
Attending in Person [Task Force members in bold]: Martha Sue Hall, Alan Dellapenna, Amy Guy, Sheree Vodicka, Ben Matthews, Bradford Sneed, Terry Chappell, Phil Thompson, Rep. Harry Warren, Dana Dandeneau, Alex Miller, Kerry Robbins, Doug Sackett, Sarah Chaires, Leah Beeson, Jeff Brown, James Swartz, Todd Roessler, Dustin Engelken, Phil Harris, David Collins, Taj Simmons, Shannon Bullock			
Calling in: Kelly Ransdell, Gerri Mattson, Sue Ann Forrest			
Martha Sue Hall provided a brief explanation about CFTF committee structure.			
Approval of minutes from previous meeting dated September 10, 2018			
Phil Harris moved to approve the minutes as written, Ben Matthews seconded the motion, a vote was taken and the motion was approved.			
A moment of silence was taken to honor those children who have lost their lives since the committee last met.			
Martha Sue Hall told a brief story about a drowning at a private pool in her community and how from that event a nonprofit was developed, which partners with the Y to teach swimming lessons. She reminded the committee of the charge of the Task Force and how the issue of drowning is challenging and emotional. Alan Dellapenna explained that all of the presentations today relate to an issue application received by the Task Force (that issue application is posted on the CFTF website).			
Topic #1: Data on child drownings			
Topic presenter: Kerry Robbins, Child Fatality Researcher, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner			
Online presentation: “Child Fatality Drownings 2007-2016-UDC”: https://www.ncleg.net/DocumentSites/Committees/NCCFTF/Unintentional%20Death/2018-2019/Presentations/Child%20Fatality%20drownings%202007-2016-UDC.pdf			
Scope of presentation: The presentation addressed data from 2007 – 2016 for unintentional drowning deaths in North Carolina. Data points presented included: # of deaths per year and trend line; deaths by location and age category; and deaths by county. Data specific to deaths in pools included: # of deaths in pools compared to other locations; pool deaths by year; total drownings versus pool drownings; pool deaths by age and year; deaths by month of the year; deaths by race; deaths by county; deaths by activity engaged in and by age; deaths related to safety components; distribution of deaths by pool circumstances such as type of pool, fence, private vs. public, life guard versus no lifeguard. (See presentation for details.)			
[A representative from DPH Injury and Violence Prevention was also present and had two graphs addressing emergency departments visits for near drownings 2016-17 for ages 0 – 17. One graph showed 182 emergency department visits resulting from unintentional drownings/submersions; another showed these ED visits by age distribution, with age 2 being the most common and young children generally (4 and under) most common.]			
Main topics covered during questions or discussion related to presentation: The 1 to 4 age group is a very vulnerable age group; although riptide situations get a lot of news attention, riptides are less of an issue than some other water situations and locations; data challenges in labeling one’s ability to swim; possible gap in			

data related to fencing; it's important to note that the data presentation addresses numbers of deaths and not rates, so does not take into account differences with trends and numbers according to population.

Alan Dellapenna commented on seeing this issue through the historical context of injury prevention for vulnerable populations. There isn't one answer to prevention but things like car seats, child proof capping, and pool fencing are examples of measures that have been taken to address child safety issues.

Topic #2: Presentation on issue application addressing pool safety and lifeguards

Topic presenters: Sarah Chaires, Family Nurse Practitioner, UNC Emergency Department and Executive Director of Carolina Swims Foundation; Douglas Sackett, Executive Director, Council for the Model Aquatic Health Code

Online presentation: "Carolina Swims 11-15-2018":

<https://www.ncleg.net/DocumentSites/Committees/NCCFTF/Unintentional%20Death/2018-2019/Presentations/Carolina%20Swims%2011-15-2018%20pdf.pdf>

"Sackett North Carolina 11-19-2018":

<https://www.ncleg.net/DocumentSites/Committees/NCCFTF/Unintentional%20Death/2018-2019/Presentations/Sackett%20North%20Carolina%2011-19-2018pdf%20Final.pdf>

Scope of presentation (see slides above for details):

Sarah Chaires presented first and addressed the following: the subject of the issue application – that NC does not have legislation that requires certified lifeguards at public pools; data on drowning nationally and in NC; how the Carolina Swims Foundation is recommending that CFTF recommend legislative changes to enact into statute a lifeguard law that adopts the provisions of the Model Aquatic Health Code that pertains to certified lifeguards; technical definition of drowning; additional data on drowning deaths with various data points; drowning by national region; drowning by impact numbers – costs; national drowning death rate trends – little change in rates since 2000's; ways to prevent drowning—multiple layers of protection with lifeguards as one strategy; studies on impact of having lifeguards; reasons pools don't use lifeguards; why NC should require lifeguards. She explained the proposal for having NC require certified lifeguards using language from the CDC's Model Aquatic Health Code language for lifeguards, lifeguard supervisors, training, zones of lifeguard surveillance, lifesaving equipment, and evidence-based best lifeguard practice. She then showed a video of a pool incident in Helsinki.

Doug Sackett addressed the following: Injury prevention strategies generally; an explanation of the Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC); how states and local jurisdictions can use the Model Aquatic Health Code; how the MAHC helps protect swimmers from drowning (if adopted); rationale for when lifeguards are required under the MAHC; how MAHC requirements set lifeguards up for success.

Some topics covered during questions or discussion related to presentation: Clarification that most pool drownings occur in private pools, not public pools; clarification as to pool fencing requirements in NC and how this relates also to residential building codes. Alan Dellapenna explained that there are national model codes for various things that states look to in determining laws and regulations to adopt in their own state.

Topic #3: Current North Carolina Pool Rules for Bather Supervision and Safety

Topic presenter: Phil Thompson, Program Manager, Public Swimming Pool Program, NC Division of Public Health

Online presentation: "CFTF Presentation NC Pool Rules and Bather Safety":

<https://www.ncleg.net/DocumentSites/Committees/NCCFTF/Unintentional%20Death/2018-2019/Presentations/CFTF%20Presentation%20NC%20Pool%20Rules%20and%20Bather%20Safety.pdf>

Scope of presentation: Brief history of NC public pool rules; definition of public swimming pool; how public pools required an operation permit; statutory requirements for the rules addressing pools; safety measures—mostly comply with and mirror the Consumer Product Safety Commission and applicable building code

standards; approx. 10,000 public swimming pools in NC and it's estimated that less than 20% are lifeguarded; rules for public pools without lifeguards; rules for pools with and without lifeguards; current shortage of lifeguards—waterparks are getting lifeguards from overseas; cost of requiring lifeguards at public pools and how cost would have economic impact on pool industry; how drownings and near drownings are not required to be officially reported to the DPH pool program, but they do have data; data on drownings in public pools compared to coastal drownings in 2018; since the adoption of state pool rules several drownings and near drownings in public pools have occurred at lifeguarded facilities; 2014 data from NC Child Fatality Prevention Team related to drownings; nationally, about 80% of pool drownings occur in private residential pools as compared to public pools; data and factors related to residential pool drownings; safety factors at public pools. Phil Thompson then addressed a number of things to consider with respect to the proposal to adopt MAHC requirements pertaining to lifeguards in NC (see slides 26 – 28) and the potential impact this would have related to such things as the current shortage of lifeguards, liability of providing lifeguards, trainers that need to be screened and vetted, recordkeeping requirements, whether an occupational licensing board would need to be established to oversee lifeguard industry; potential push back from pool industry; cost of providing lifeguards and whether pool closings resulting from cost would decrease # of kids learning to swim and then increase instead of decrease # of drownings.

Some topics addressed during questions and discussion following presentation: How Carolina Swims Foundation trains older foster kids to be lifeguards; how lifeguard training costs hundreds of dollars but then lifeguards are paid minimum wage, which is a conflict adding to the shortage of lifeguards; whether a study could be done to see which pools in NC would fall into MAHC risk factors to require lifeguards; the potential of looking into drowning prevention technologies to also use/require at public pools. While NC has not adopted elements of the MCHC per se, there are parts of CDC recommendations that have been adopted. Adopting new rules related to pools takes more time than addressing pool rules through legislation. Data indicates the potential need for doing more with water safety related to residential pools.

Martha Sue Hall expressed appreciation for those who presented information today. She explained to the committee that the task was to address the proposal in the issue application – which was whether to recommend that NC should adopt the MAHC related to lifeguards at public pools. She explained that whatever recommendations are made by this committee must then be presented to the full CFTF, who will determine whether to approve recommendations at the last meeting of the CFTF on December 3rd.

Main topics addressed in further discussion: the fact that there are many remaining questions about this issue and that there are many stakeholders who would have an interest in this issue such as the YMCA, cities, counties, hotels, nonprofit camps, housing industry, private water parks, Department of Insurance, etc. Some states are doing a better job than others with respect to preventive measures in pools and it would be valuable to learn about other states. Building codes are important to consider, and more information on this topic is needed. The cost of lifeguard training as well as recruiting lifeguards to address a shortage of lifeguards are also important issues to examine. Ben Matthews commented that because it seems there's a lot the committee still doesn't know about this issue, a recommendation related to further study might make sense. Martha Sue Hall agreed and explained that a recommendation that is not legislative, such as one to do further study, is an administrative recommendation. Alan Dellapenna and Kella Hatcher explained the CFTF levels of recommendations: support, endorse, and administrative. Alan Dellapenna explained how the CFTF has previously done further study on issues, sometimes partnering with other organizations. Sheree Vodicka of YMCA of the Triangle indicated that drowning prevention was an issue the Y was focused on for 2019 and that they would therefore be interested in assisting with further study of this issue.

Actions taken: Ben Matthews made a motion to recommend to the full CFTF further study of this issue involving various stakeholders so that additional information could be brought back to the Child Fatality Task Force. Bradford Sneed seconded the motion. Martha Sue Hall asked for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 12:45