

Child Fatality Task Force Unintentional Death Prevention Committee Meeting Minutes

Type of Meeting: Unintentional Death Prevention Committee		Date: January 27, 2020
Facilitator: Alan Dellapenna, Martha Sue Hall, committee co-chairs	Time called to order: 10:01 am	Location: General Assembly
<p>Attending in Person [Task Force members in bold]: Martha Sue Hall, Cindy Bizzell, Bruce Robistow, Vickie Sawyer, Howard Hunter, Alan Dellapenna, Shannon Bullock, Daniel Findley, Mark Ezzell, Brian Mayhew, Bill Tarplee, Jim Martin, Arthur Goodwin, Donna Carter, Jim Burgin, Phil Harris, Kerry Young, Rep. Harry Warren, Sally Herndon, Sheree Vodicka, Elizabeth Robinson, Marianne Weant, Kristen Kucera, Courtney Haley, Janice White, Ingrid Bou-Saada, Marissa Turner</p>		
<p>After self-introductions were made, a moment of silence was taken to honor those children who have died since the committee last met.</p>		
<p>Alan Dellapenna explained when the committee meets and its process in preparing for the short session.</p>		
<p>Approval of minutes from previous meeting dated December 9, 2019</p>		
<p>Arthur Goodwin moved to approve the minutes as written; Representative Howard Hunter seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion carried.</p>		
<p>Kella Hatcher described how the committees develop recommendations for the Task Force. Recommendations can be for legislative support (highest level of support where Task Force takes the lead), legislative endorse (where others are working on items and Task Force endorses their efforts), or administrative (items that do not require legislation but that the Task Force wants to see advanced or wants to continue to work on). Carry-over items are those that were on the Task Force agenda for the prior year but did not fully advance; these items are typically brought back before the committee so the committee can determine whether it wants to repeat the recommendation for the upcoming action agenda. She noted that the upcoming legislative session is a short session and many think it will be much shorter than usual; this impacts not only the available time the legislature has to work on bills but the types of items the legislature will be working on are also different in a short session year.</p>		
<p>Topic #1: Continued committee discussion of carry-over motor vehicle items: ignition interlocks for all DWI offenders; primary enforcement of rear seat restraints</p>		
<p>Topic presenter/facilitators: Kella Hatcher, Martha Sue Hall, Alan Dellapenna</p>		
<p>Online presentation: No slides, however fact sheets for the two items being discussed were passed out: Rear seat item: https://www.ncleg.gov/DocumentSites/Committees/NCCFTF//in%20the%20spotlight/Current%20Fact%20Sheets/Rear%20Seat%20Restraint%20Fact%20Sheet%20CFTF%202019.pdf Ignition interlock item: https://www.ncleg.gov/DocumentSites/Committees/NCCFTF//in%20the%20spotlight/Current%20Fact%20Sheets/Ignition%20Interlock%20CFTF%202019.pdf</p>		

Scope of presentation and related discussion

Kella Hatcher explained that these two items were discussed in the last meeting of this committee and that there was interest in better understanding the work of other organizations on these issues. She passed around CFTF 2019 fact sheets on the rear seat and ignition interlock issues (links provided above). After she briefly explained the rear seat issue, some discussion about that issue took place (see below), then she briefly explained the ignition interlock issue after which further discussion took place (see below).

Highlights of discussion are summarized here:

- Dr. Daniel Findley explained a study that examined the age of a rear seat fatality and their corresponding driver's age which indicated that most fatalities of young children occur with a driver that is more than 25 years old. The percentage of fatalities for teenagers and young adults are much higher in the same drivers' age range. For example, for all 16- to 17-year-old unrestrained rear seat fatalities, 34% were in a vehicle driven by another 16- to 17-year-old.
- Although rear seat restraints are important, only a third of motor vehicle trips involve back seat passengers; however, unrestrained passengers represent one-third of fatalities.
- There are challenges with enforcing the rear seat law, however just having the law does increase use of restraints as more become educated about the need for restraints.
- The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration is pushing the rear seat issue, but so far this has proved to be a difficult issue to advance in NC.
- The issue of distracted driving is an important issue in the context of highway safety, and the root cause of accidents should be focused on.
- With respect to other organizations working on these motor vehicle issues, there appears to more interest in the ignition interlock issue than the rear seat issue.
- Some committee participants expressed the view that the ignition interlock issue was potentially more impactful and should be prioritized.
- Alan Dellapenna explained that his Injury & Violence Prevention Branch at the Division of Public Health is applying for a grant that would involve them taking a closer look at the ignition interlock issue.
- Some issues related to ignition interlock are still being examined, for example the ways to address interlocks for indigent offenders.

Martha Sue Hall explained the three levels for the action agenda and that what the committee is doing right now is discussing short session 2020 and the committee needs to decide on the issue of rear seat restraints. This recommendation can be discontinued for short session, it could be a supported/endorsed, or it can be an administrative item that gets brought back to look at for the long session. She provided a sample administrative recommendation: *Administratively continue efforts to gather information on the potential for future legislation that allows for primary enforcement of all unrestrained back seat passengers with the intent to bring this item back for consideration by the Unintentional Death Prevention Committee prior to the 2021 legislative long session.* She then asked for discussion on the rear seat issue. Phil Harris made a motion for the committee to approve this administrative option for the rear seat restraint issue. Mark Ezzell seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Phil Harris made a motion to recommend that the ignition interlock item move forward as a legislative support recommendation. Mark Ezzell seconded the motion.

Further discussion on the ignition interlock item took place and highlights are summarized here:

- Some wondered whether this is the right time for this recommendation as others will be making efforts to get more information that they would have prior to the next long session; however this is an important issue to prioritize.

- There is a lot of strong evidence that this policy change would be an impactful safety strategy.
- Although this policy change is not directed specifically to child safety and it is difficult to quantify how many children would be affected, it would impact child safety as DWIs do impact children.
- It is important to remember that a leading cause of death for children is motor vehicle accidents. North Carolina has already addressed many of the big impactful motor vehicle policy changes that affect children, for example the Graduated Driver License Program. Now our state must work on the items that may involve more indirect strategies, and this is an example of one that rises to the top of those strategies that will make a difference.
- It would be good to understand how issues related to the Second Chance Act or small businesses could be impacted by this.

A vote was taken on the motion made by Phil Harris to move forward as a legislative support recommendation, the motion carried.

Actions taken (capturing actions noted above):

Phil Harris made a motion to administratively continue efforts to gather information on the potential for future legislation that allows for primary enforcement of all unrestrained back seat passengers with the intent to bring this item back for consideration by the Unintentional Death Prevention Committee prior to the 2021 legislative long session. Mark Ezzell seconded the motion. A vote was taken on the motion, the motion carried.

Phil Harris made a motion to recommend that the ignition interlock item advance as a legislative support recommendation. Mark Ezzell seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion carried. Senator Sawyer voted against the motion.

Alan Dellapenna announced that the issue application that addressed Forensic Testing for Alcohol that was presented at the last meeting of this committee has been withdrawn, so the committee will not be taking up that issue at this time.

Topic #2: Youth Nicotine Use Prevention (carry-over item)

Topic presenter: Jim Martin, MS, Director of Policy and Programs, NC Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch, NC Division of Public Health

Online presentation: “E-Cigarette Epidemic Jan 27 2020 FINAL”

<https://www.ncleg.gov/DocumentSites/Committees/NCCFTF/Unintentional%20Death/2019-2020/presentations%20and%20handouts/E-Cigarette%20Epidemic%20Jan%2027%202020%20FINAL.pdf>

Scope of presentation: Information was presented on the burden of tobacco use in North Carolina, the variety of e-cigarettes, and the impact on middle and high school users. This is a response to an epidemic of tobacco usage in North Carolina. Smoking severely impacts health care costs, Medicaid, and additional costs from health problems due to secondhand smoke. Although youth cigarette smoking is decreasing, it is largely unchanged from 2015-2017. Although cigarette usage has declined, there has been an increase in e-cigarette usage among high school students. The most popular e-cigarette among youth is by the brand JUUL. Youth are enticed to these products due to advertising and flavor variety. Although appealing, nicotine is what gets them addicted. Slide 11 provides data on patients who were hospitalized due to lung injury associated with vaping. Slide 12 shows information on lung injuries associated with vaping in North Carolina: users’ age ranged from 13-72, the majority being male and young adults requiring respiratory support. Jim Martin discussed recommendations from the CDC and the U.S. Surgeon General, and explained how local, state, and national policies impact use among youth. He noted that the federal government has raised the age of tobacco sales to age 21 which can shorten the social norms of distribution among young people, however state law is not currently aligned with this. Jim Martin shared a case related to a North Carolina youth who became so addicted to e-cigarettes he suffered several negative impacts including a seizure. He ultimately went to rehab to address

the addiction and is now telling his story publicly. Jim Martin presented a data chart addressing state spending on tobacco prevention compared to high school tobacco and e-cigarette use [slide 26, but numbered 41]. He explained the types of educational initiatives that are effective for youth, including peer initiatives, and how North Carolina does not currently have the resources to do the type of evidence-based campaign that has been done in Virginia. He explained some of the issues that schools are dealing with. He explained that there are tobacco treatment standards of care for young people and how various programs and organizations in NC are partnering with youth tobacco prevention efforts.

Main topics covered during questions or discussion related to presentation:

There was discussion about what's required to be smoke free also being tobacco free, and about the fact that e-cigarettes are a fire hazard because of the batteries.

Martha Sue Hall explained that the committee needed to determine whether it wanted to repeat for 2020 this recommendation to endorse \$7 million in additional funding for youth nicotine use prevention.

Actions taken:

Sheree Vodicka moved to repeat this recommendation to endorse additional funding [\$7 million for youth nicotine use prevention]; Bruce Robistow seconded the motion; a vote was taken on the motion, the motion carried.

Topic #3: Update on progress of group examining the prevention of catastrophic injuries and illnesses in North Carolina youth athletes

Topic presenter: Kristen L. Kucera, PhD, MSPH, ATC, LAT, Director, National Center for Catastrophic Sport Injury Research & Associate Professor, Department of Exercise & Sport Science, UNC Chapel Hill; Janice White, M.Ed., SLP, CBIS, Injury Prevention Consultant, Injury & Violence Prevention Branch, NC Division of Public Health

Online presentation: "CFTF Issue Catastrophic Sport Injuries 27 Jan2020"

<https://www.ncleg.gov/DocumentSites/Committees/NCCFTF/Unintentional%20Death/2019-2020/presentations%20and%20handouts/CFTF%20Issue%20Catastrophic%20Sport%20Injuries%2027Jan2020.pdf>

Alan Dellapenna explained that this topic originally came to the CFTF through an issue application years ago, and a group has been working on this issue.

Scope of presentation: Kristen Kucera explained the definition of sport-related catastrophic injury or illness which are conditions that directly result in fatality, permanent disability, or events that are life threatening. She provided a case study involving a young athlete in NC that highlighted the importance of this issue along with prevention opportunities, and she provided other case examples during her presentation. She explained the work of the National Center for Catastrophic Sport Injury Research (NCCSIR) and their surveillance methods [slides 5-6]. Their objective with the issue application to the NC CFTF was to increase awareness and collaboration among agencies at the state level. This effort has the potential to assist surveillance and prevention efforts, targeting organized and sponsored sport participants [slide 8]. She explained target populations for their work and that 198,252 NC high school athletes experienced a catastrophic injury during the 2018-2019 school year [slide 10]. She displayed data of catastrophic events by sports. Football results in the most catastrophic events at 50%, followed by basketball at 15%. Sudden cardiac arrest is the most common sport injury followed by traumatic brain injury [slide 13]. She explained that in 2017 North Carolina led the nation in having the most comprehensive health and safety school policies, and the current law in NC enacted in 2011, the Gfeller-Waller law which is one of the most comprehensive laws of this nature in the U.S. [slides 14 & 15]

Jan White explained that this issue was first presented to the CFTF in 2017 and the CFTF asked the Injury and Violence Prevention Branch of the NC DPH to convene a stakeholder group to examine this issue [slide 18] [note: this was an administrative item on the Task Force agenda]. As a result, a stakeholder group is being convened

consisting of 30 organizations to improve their processes with three goals: improving reporting, improving messaging and policy, and promoting implementation of evidence-based and informed prevention strategies [slides 19-22]. A great deal of work over the course of a year was put into preparing for stakeholder meetings. Jan White explained that in order to achieve these goals, a formalized and solidified infrastructure will be in place for collaboration towards these goals. DPH will co-ordinate a series of stakeholder meetings. She discussed the first stakeholder meeting feedback on slide 25.

Main topics covered during questions or discussion related to presentation:

- The degree to which pre-existing conditions are present in cardiac arrest situations and efforts being made to determine this – Kristen Kucera did not have statistics on this at the moment but could get them.
- Whether the safety of officials and trainers should be part of this effort.
- The role of hospital emergency records in this effort.
- When it comes to collecting medical data, data from the insurance industry is often overlooked.
- Medicaid is at the table on this effort but so far not private insurers.
- There was a bill in 2017 that would have required reporting by sports organizations.

Actions taken: None. Information only.

Topic #4: Firearm safe storage initiative (carry-over item)

Topic presenter: Kella Hatcher, Executive Director, NC Child Fatality Task Force

Online presentation: “Firearm Safety Initiative UD 1-27-2020”

<https://www.ncleg.gov/DocumentSites/Committees/NCCFTF/Unintentional%20Death/2019-2020/presentations%20and%20handouts/Firearm%20Safety%20Initiative%20UD%201-27-2020.pdf>

Scope of presentation: Kella Hatcher explained how in 2018 and 2019, the Task Force recommended that the state launch and fund a new statewide firearm safety initiative that focused on education and awareness surrounding firearm safe storage and distribution of free gun locks. She discussed what led to the firearm safety initiative recommendation on slide 3. Firearms in the context of youth suicide was a particular issue of concern expressed by the State Child Fatality Prevention Team. She explained that there was a diverse group of stakeholders who came together to address firearm safety and the types of representation in that group. Out of this work the Task Force recommended the launching and funding of a statewide firearm safe storage initiative. The recommended that components of the initiative include: state-level development of a firearm safety website, a firearm safety toolkit, and outreach to local communities to implement initiative so they can meet their own needs [slide 5]. She explained how a 2019 bill addressed the launching and funding of this initiative, how the text of this bill was included in the budget bill (which has not passed), and how the Governor signed a gun safety Executive Directive [slide 6]. Data was presented showing that from 2009-2018 there was a 59% increase of NC Resident firearm-related mortality rates of children ages 0 to 17 [slide 7]. The majority of these deaths were homicides and suicides. Additional data was provided on: firearm-related deaths and injuries to children in NC [see slide 8]; how the suicide rate for youth in NC is increasing; and the proportion of NC residents who own firearms (41.6%) and those who keep their firearm unsecured (50.6%). The relationship between safe storage and suicide was explained as access to firearms is a known risk factor for suicide, many suicide attempts are hastily decided upon, and firearms used in youth suicide usually belong to a parent [slide 11]. She further explained how safe firearm storage relates to school safety, with guns from home frequently being used in school shootings [slide 12]. North Carolina has a Child Access Prevention Law that imposes criminal liability after the fact on adults who negligently allow children access to firearms [slide 13]. Kella Hatcher emphasized the importance of education and awareness about safe storage of firearms and how it is a common sense safety strategy like so many other common sense actions that save lives and prevent injuries [slide 14].

Main topics covered during questions or discussion related to presentation:

Senator Burgin commented that it would be good if gun safety was a topic taught in schools. Martha Sue Hall explained the 2019 firearm safety recommendation: "Support state funding for a new statewide firearm safety initiative, as recommended by the 2017 Firearm Safety Stakeholder Group, that is focused on education and awareness surrounding firearm safe storage and distribution of free gun locks; funding to go to DHHS to appropriately engage a third-party organization to implement the initiative. (Two-year funding estimate is for \$155,700: \$86,500 for year one and \$69,200 for year two.)"

Martha Sue Hall expressed that she was pleased this prior recommendation had advanced as far as it had, and asked the committee what they desired to do on this recommendation for 2020.

Actions taken:

Bruce Robistow moved to repeat this recommendation for 2020 (see language above), Cindy Bizzell seconded the motion, a vote was taken and the motion carried.

Announcements:

Sheree Vodicka said that she wanted to update the committee on events related to the issue application previously taken up by the committee that addressed Model Aquatic Health Code provisions relating to lifeguards. (At the last meeting, Sheree had volunteered to pursue the possibility of getting graduate students at the Gillings School of Public Health at UNC to study this issue.) Sheree pursued this possibility with the Gillings School and the feedback was that the issue was too narrow for this type of graduate project although the broader topic of policy issues related to water safety could potentially be pursued by students. However, none of the students ended up choosing the water safety project so it is not being pursued. Bruce Robistow noted that East Carolina University may have a similar program with graduate students.

Alan Dellapenna thanked everyone for their participation and the great input at the meeting by subject matter experts.

Adjourned.