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Child Fatality Review Boards: Increasing Collaboration in Rural America

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CHILD FATALITY REVIEW BOARDS: INCREASING COLLABORATION IN RURAL AMERICA

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Rationale

- A CFR team investigates child fatalities in an effort to identify the causes, risk factors, and preventability of child deaths within a specific community.
- Idaho was the last state to develop a state child fatality review program in 2012.
- There is a significant gap in data that can be useful for local (county level) efforts to prevent child fatality versus state-level data.
- Having current information on child fatalities at the local level can assist county officials with best use of county resources.

Purpose/Aims

The purpose of this project was to assist a rural county in Idaho to streamline and update their child fatality review process to better align with national standards.



Methods

A newer, updated process was developed to analyze pediatric fatalities in 2016 & 2017 for a rural Idaho county.

The primary changes included increasing the amount of information surrounding each child's death. This includes:

- Previous medical records.
- CPS case reports (if appropriate).
- A more standardized format so records from various law enforcement agencies can be utilized; not just coroner records.

In addition to an analysis of the various factors surrounding the deaths of the children, each report contains national, evidence based recommendations for reducing or preventing these types of deaths in the future.

Results

- The new & improved CFR board data collection & reporting process was well accepted.
- With assistance from stakeholders, the amount and quality of collected data has increased significantly leading to a better understanding of pediatric fatalities in 2016 & 2017.

Clinical Relevance

- The ultimate goal of analyzing child fatalities is the prevention of these tragic occurrences.
- This information, along with data obtained from medical examiner autopsies, will present an accurate picture of the manner of death.
- The development of prevention programs can be directed toward preventing these fatalities.

Conclusion

- This project played an important role in helping to understand the occurrence of child fatalities at the local level.
- Accurate, up-to-date data increases the CFR board's ability to target limited public health resources appropriately, such as public service announcements or programs in local schools, as well as to promote legislative policy changes.

