

## Engaging with local governments for injury prevention

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### Context

Injury Matters (IM) works to influence policy makers about the impact of injury and promotes prevention as a priority. Local Governments (LG) have an increasing responsibility for community health and wellbeing, providing opportunity to engage in injury prevention and safety promotion activities. IM has collaborated with health services and LGs to raise awareness of key injury issues in their area and supported in the delivery of solution-focused injury prevention initiatives.

### Objectives

This presentation will discuss the process IM undertook to engage with a LG to influence local injury prevention and safety promotion initiatives.

### Key messages

- Importance of aligning injury prevention and safety promotion priorities with local government plans.
- Access to current epidemiological data is a useful engagement tool with LGs to demonstrate the burden of injury for local residents.
- Access to current evidence based interventions and resources builds LG capacity to implement injury prevention activities.
- Partnerships are critical for sustainability of injury prevention initiatives.

### Discussion and conclusions

IM began by developing stakeholder relationships with the Population Health Unit from the governing area health service and an identified LG. Local injury epidemiological data was used as a tool for engagement to increase awareness, understanding and priority of injury. Falls injuries were identified through the data as a leading issue within the LG. A review of the LG strategies and plans, including the Draft Public Health Plan, highlighted injury prevention synergies with the LG and IM for future collaborations.

IM was able to provide in-kind support for falls prevention activities through the Stay On Your Feet<sup>®</sup> program. This included resources, campaign toolkits, education sessions for older adults, health worker training, and attendance at local community events.

For LG residents that were identified as high-risk for a fall, IM collaboratively offered the *Stepping On* program to build resident falls prevention capacity. Following the engagement,

the LG has embedded injury prevention priority areas within their Public Health Plan, including falls, road safety, drownings, interpersonal violence and dog bites.

### **How policy/practice pushes the boundaries**

Traditionally LGs have not identified with injury prevention. Identifying how injury prevention and safety promotion aligns with existing strategies and plans is important to influence local policy and injury prevention initiatives. To support LGs to implement injury prevention initiatives, IM has developed a LG Engagement Strategy, which sets out the communication, partnerships and training activities IM will undertake with LGs in WA.