

Australian Paediatric Surveillance Unit

DROWNING / NEAR DROWNING

Objectives: To obtain more detailed information on drowning and near drowning incidents that occur in children five years of age or younger, with particular emphasis on circumstances leading to the incident and the identification of possible preventative measures.

Investigator(s): Dr Victory Carey*
(Chief)* Professor Graham Vimpani

Contact Address: Research Officer
Childsafe NSW
Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children
Camperdown NSW 2050
Phone: 02 692 6106
Fax: 02 519 3662

Summary Protocol:

Drowning is the major cause of death in the 1-4 year age group accounting for 15% of all deaths. In NSW each year an average of 24 children under five years die as a result of drowning. An average of 10 of these deaths occur in private swimming pools. The remaining deaths occur at various sites including rivers, creeks, dams baths and the ocean.

Information on near drowning and drowning incidents collected through the APSU will provide additional information on the circumstances associated with these incidents and allow the identification of possible preventative measures.

Case Definition:

Any child under five years of age seen as a result of an incident involving immersion of the child in any body of water (eg., swimming pool, dam, river, ocean, nappy bucket).

Reporting Instructions:

Any child under five years of age seen in the last month who has experienced a drowning or near-drowning incident.

Follow-up of positive returns:

A questionnaire requesting further details will be forwarded to the practitioners who report a case.