

Beyond Mortality

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Local Health Departments are challenged to provide the core public health functions and essential public health services, many of which are highly dependent on assessment related functions and services. Strong assessment capacity is critical for local health departments to carry out their primary roles of monitoring the community's health status, identifying and diagnosing community health problems and hazards, as well as informing and educating the community about the findings. While there is increasing support for local health agencies to utilize vital statistics records, such as birth and death certificate information, other sources of health data are increasingly available and the use of these data can substantially enhance the assessment capacity. This presentation will illustrate how data such as hospital emergency department data and hospital discharge data can be used to monitor the health status and report issues of concern to the community. Particularly highlighted here, are illustrations of how one county health department in Jacksonville Florida uses these data combined with other data to address emerging local health issues such as violence, asthma, and access to care. The use of these data help document local problems such as high rates of ambulatory sensitive conditions which in turn help the community allocate resources and access additional resources to address major health problems. The presentation will demonstrate how the use of these data in reports that display charts and maps empower the local community to engage in more informed decision making related to public health issues of major concern.

250 Words