The Out-of-Home Firearm Storage Project

Brief Impact Statement. Firearms account for the majority of suicide deaths in the USA. A recommended approach for suicide prevention is reducing access to firearms, including through voluntary, temporary storage away from home. This project identified opportunities and addressable challenges for out-of-home storage.

The Impact

The Out-of-Home Firearm Storage project has resulted in community and policy benefits.

- Additional states have created networks and/or maps showing storage locations.
- Research on community support and concerns allowed targeted programs to optimize uptake, including funding, protocol clarification, and new policy (WA, LA).
- Pilot programs through VA (concluded) and military

The Challenge

Moving firearms out of the home – for temporary, voluntary storage elsewhere – is a recommended suicide prevention strategy. It may also help prevent homicide, unintentional injuries, and theft. Online state maps can show firearm retailers/ranges and law enforcement agencies offering storage, but little was known about viewpoints of storage locations or storage users.

The Approach

With NIH funding, the team used mixed methods to examine the perspectives of stakeholders, along with barriers and facilitators to storage.

- Qualitative interviews and surveys with storage locations (firearm retailers/ranges, law enforcement agencies) and storage users (firearm owners) in Colorado & Washington
- Qualitative Interviews with key personnel in other states building or considering maps
- Creation of a ‘how-to’ toolkit for states to support temporary, voluntary, out-of-home storage

Research Highlights

Key Benefits

- Interviews with 100 stakeholders showed support for concept but concerns about liability and funding/logistics
- 27% of people in homes with firearms had stored them away from home in past 5 years
- 45% of firearm ranges/retailers in two states had provided storage

Key Benefits

- The toolkit and a Google Group are enhancing communication across states
- The White House highlighted multi-state storage maps highlighted as promising suicide prevention approach
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms clarified storage procedures for firearm retailers/ranges
- Washington and Louisiana passed state laws providing liability protection for locations offering storage
- Federal legislation is being drafted to provide funding to storage locations

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Find out more:
http://cufirearminjuryprevention.org/
Study publications

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