SUMMARY

Surveillance of injuries is essential for priority setting and for preventive interventions. The European Union has a long history of Emergency Department based injury surveillance. These data are the basis for several actions concerning injury prevention. The aim of the present project was to develop a coding manual for a surveillance system on injuries that can be used at Emergency Departments throughout the European Union and that is based on best practices for classifications and injury surveillance.

This new Injury Surveillance System (ISS) coding manual is meant to record information at (a selection of) Emergency Departments within the European Union on all accidents/injuries attending these departments: an all injury coding manual. Therefore, the ISS coding manual contributes to the standardisation of injury and accident surveillance in the European Union: it is the basis for comparability of injury data from different member states.

Coding manual

The ISS coding manual is based on data elements and codes from three sources:
- International Classification of External Causes of Injuries (ICECI), a classification of the World Health Organization (WHO) for the external causes of injuries with an alpha status, subject to formal procedures for acceptance as related classification within the Family of International Classifications of the WHO;
- the Home and Leisure Accidents V2000 coding manual (HLA V2000), used for recording home and leisure accident data for the former European Home and Leisure Accident Surveillance System (EHLASS);
- the Minimum Data Sets on Injuries (MDS-Is), developed under the auspices of the European Commission and meant to record information on accidents/injuries is less resourced (as far as information or money is concerned) settings.

The data elements relevant for the ISS-coding manual (20 in total) on injuries were selected from all three sources:
- ICECI version 1.1a: data elements related to the external causes
- HLA V2000: additional data elements needed for injury surveillance: patient data, follow-up, administrative data, narrative
- MDS-Is: type of injury and body part

The current HLA V2000 coding manual provided the guidance for determining this level of detail: the actual codes.

Implementation

The HLA V2000 manual will be replaced by the ISS coding manual. It is recommended to actually start using the ISS coding manual (as successor of the previous EHLASS coding manuals, including HLA V2000) from January 1, 2005.

Before the ISS manual can actually be used in practice, translations and conversion tables are needed, but also software (f.i. for data entry) needs to be adjusted and staff needs to be trained.

It is recommended to publish the ISS coding manual on both the website of the European Commission and the website of ICECI.
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