INJURY AND ACCIDENT DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS IN EUROPE IN SUPPORT OF CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY POLICY

Abstract:
Background Availability of data on the external causes of injuries/accidents which includes product related information is a prerequisite to guide targeted preventive actions in the area of consumer product safety and to support market surveillance enforcement and policy efforts in the EU.
Description of the problem Unlike in the USA, no common injury database with meaningful information to support product safety work is currently in force in the EU. Data on injuries/accidents are collected in an extremely patchy and diverse way across Member States. Yet, the amount of data available at national level in diverse fields (e.g. injury datasets, fire statistics, poison centers) can potentially provide relevant information for market surveillance and product safety policy and enforcement purposes. However, it is frequently not comparable due to lack of harmonized methodology and classification, covers only a limited number of injury types or has a limited territorial coverage. Results/Changes EC (DG JUST and DG JRC) collaborate on injuries/accident data collection for product safety and market surveillance with the aim to: map existing data collection systems on injuries/accidents of relevance for product safety and market surveillance in MS; explore innovative IT tools to improve systems’ interoperability; develop a methodology to organize/filter/extract/use available data trends; identify possible alternatives/solutions with a view to increase the availability of injury/accident data useful for product safety purposes and assessing the related costs. Conclusions European Commission works towards adding EU value to existing national data collections in MS on accident/injuries in support of product safety and market surveillance with traceable policy impact and societal benefits: informing and boosting the effectiveness of product safety policy actions; improving product safety standards; reducing societal burden of injuries and accidents due to unsafe products and related health costs.

URI:
Authors:
KEPHALOPOULOS Stylianos
CHIAMPARINO Tommaso
RADOVNIKOVIC Anita
REINA Vittorio
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