

## Three New Safe Community Programmes in Australia

In March this year, the New South Wales government announced the commencement of three new pilot projects. The Injury Prevention Policy Unit of the NSW Department of Health in Australia hosted a *Safe Communities Seminar* where recognition of successful tender applications was well supported by an opportune international visit by the World Health Organisation's Safe Communities' ambassador, Professor Leif Svanström.

Leading the seminar, NSW Health's Deputy Director General, Dr Andrew Wilson congratulated the successful tender applicants of the Safe Communities Grants Programme. Dr Wilson's comments also provided a welcome endorsement of the efforts of partnership building as a crucial strategy to address injury reduction.

Through a partnership between the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) and NSW Health, funding has been allocated to support Safe Communities projects in Gundagai, in Kempsey and Port Macquarie, and in Kiama. These projects will be implemented by Area Health Services – the Greater Murray, Mid North Coast and Illawarra, respectively. These projects will be co-ordinated through a part-time officer located in the Northern Sydney Area Health Service and all three projects will be independently evaluated.

Professor Svanström spoke about the global Safe Communities movement and took the opportunity to promote the important connection between international, state and local level operations for the Safe Communities Programme. While guest representatives from each of the three Area Health Services presented their programme plans and objectives, Professor Svanstrom provided feedback and support.

Support for the *Safe Communities* concept continues to grow stronger in NSW. NSW Health is delighted to see these project opportunities come to fruition.

Robyn James, NSW Health



*Photo: back row from left. Paul Czulowski (Kiama Council), Frank Walner (Illawarra Healthy Cities), Leif Svanström, Deb Church (Mid North Coast Area Health Service) Nicki Melville (Greater Murray Health Service), Karen Tavener-Smith (Illawarra Area Health Service), Cora Shiroyama (Mid North Coast Area Health Service).*

### **Travelling Seminar on Safe Communities 15-25 February, 2000**

#### **Bangladesh**

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## Melbourne's Safety Centre joins the Safe Communities family

The Royal Children's Hospital Safety Centre in Melbourne, Australia, has become the fourth international Safe Communities Support Centre to be affiliated to the World Health Organisation's Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion. Professor Leif Svanström, accompanied by Mrs Moa Sundström, presented the accreditation certificate at a ceremony held at the Royal Children's Hospital on Monday 19 April 1999.

Also in attendance were representatives of the other Melbourne Safe Communities Support Centre – the Monash University Accident Research Centre – and the two Victorian Safe Communities – the City of Hume and the Shire of Latrobe. They all offered their congratulations. Professor Svanström also carried a special congratulatory cake from Waimakiri Council in Rangiora, New Zealand.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Hospital's acting CEO, Professor Glenn Bowes, said that an important element in the Safety Centre's achievement of this honour was the success of its long-term community outreach programme, the Safe Accident-Free Environment (SAFE) programme. The programme works with low-income families and groups from non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB) who have reduced capacity to access safety information and

services. The peer-education model used by the SAFE programme employs peer educators to work with NESB communities in their own first languages to achieve environmental and behavioural changes in their local environments.



The centre is currently working on three community-based projects:

- a road-safety media campaign with VicRoads aimed at 11 language groups in Melbourne, in which peer educators conduct interviews in the print and electronic media to make families in their communities aware of passenger, pedestrian and cycling safety;

- a research project identifying hazards in low-income public and private rental housing to recommend changes in housing policy to the health department; and,

- a home fire-safety programme in conjunction with fire station officers from the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services to deliver safety messages to NESB communities.

Jan Shield



Photo: Safety exhibitions at the Centre

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