

What is a Safe Community? (20140217)

The Safe Communities concept began its formal existence at the First World Conference on Accident and Injury Prevention held in Stockholm, Sweden in September 1989.

The Manifesto for Safe Communities, Safety –A Universal Concern and Responsibility for All (<http://www.ki.se/csp/pdf/Manifesto.pdf>) the resolution of the conference, states, "All human beings have an equal right to health and safety." This is a fundamental aspect of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Health for All strategy and for the WHO Global Programme Injury Control Violence and Injury Prevention and Disability (VIP)

http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/about/en/

This premise has led to community action around the world; actions leading to Safe Communities. In the Manifesto the following ground pillars for the movement are stated:

1. Accident and injury prevention requires coordinated action by many groups
2. Health sector have a crucial role in collecting information on injured people, injury patterns, causes of injuries and hazard situations
3. Local programs must include all citizens and focus the most vulnerable
4. Evaluation both of the process and outcome of a safety promotion program is important
5. An international development work for Safe Communities is necessary!
6. We need a models among the communities

The models – members of the International Safe Community network – must therefore have a higher standard of safety than what is required according to the law and practice. They must also always aim at continuous improvement of their safety work. This must be done together with all actors and the citizens (the democratic dimension) in the community and must be trustful. It is of vital importance that the work is systematic and sustainable. No community can develop the safety through it's own work therefore the communities must be supported by the research globally and work together in a network with collaboration and benchmarking.

To be member of the International Safe Community Network a community must make an application to WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion (WHO CCCSP) at the Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden (<http://www.ki.se/csp/>) and International Safe Community Certifiers (http://www.ki.se/csp/safe_community_certifier_en.htm) accredited by WHO CCCSP must review the work and the following seven indicators must be fulfilled:

1. An infrastructure based on partnership and collaborations, governed by a cross- sector group that is responsible for safety promotion in their community;
2. Long-term, sustainable programs covering genders and all ages, environments, and situations;
3. Programs that target high-risk groups and environments, and programs that promote safety for vulnerable groups;
4. Programs that are based on the available evidence;
5. Programs that document the frequency and causes of injuries;
6. Evaluation measures to assess their programs, processes and the effects of change;
7. On-going participation in national and international Safe Communities networks.

Why become an International Safe Community?

There are many reasons for a community to systematically work for increased safety and reducing injuries. In principal all accidents are possible to prevent. We know that around 25 % of all death and injuries are eliminated in communities working systematically with the Safe Community concept. We have seen this very good result in communities all over the world and in different cultures. http://www.ki.se/csp/who_publications_en.htm

Injuries are very major health problem. It is the most serious health problem measured as lost years, many young and middle-aged are hit. Injuries cause huge human suffering and course a lot of economic loads for the communities and their citizens.

How to become an International Safe Community?

The first step normally is to contact WHO CCCSP's Safe Community Support Centres (http://www.ki.se/csp/support_centers_members_en.htm) or another community who already is member in the network (http://www.ki.se/csp/who_safe_communities_network_en.htm), make study visits and take part in Regional and International Safe Community conferences (http://www.ki.se/csp/who_conferences_en.htm).

Then start the planning of the Safe Community program.

The next step usually is to create a cross sector group with all potential partners in the community usually representatives from sectors such as health, social service, urban planning and building, fire brigade, police, public works, sport and traffic safety. It is also of vital importance to involve NGOs (non-governmental organization) representing different interests such as parents, sport clubs, retired, the Red Cross or similar.

The mayor or another high ranked person must chair such a group.

It is important to know the risks for injuries in the community.

The health sector has a crucial role to do that.

Local data always engage actors in the community.

Based on that the group formulate and propose objectives for the safety. One can be to within five years reduce the death and serious injuries by 25 %.

Do not formulate too many objectives.

After that different working groups use to be established.

The program must be adopted by the local government and it is necessary that the local government use its governing tools to implement the safety program.

The most important governing tools are economic, regulations and objectives.

After about two years it is possible to start the process to apply to be member of the International Safe Community network. In order to make the application-process easy and smooth the application system is computer-based.

The community must inform how it works systematically to increase safety according to the seven indicators in the application.

In order to support the communities in this process WHO CCCSP have worked out a special formula **Form A**. http://www.ki.se/csp/pdf/guidelines/form_a_2014.pdf

When the application process starts send a "Letter of intent"

http://www.ki.se/csp/pdf/letter/letter_of_intent_2014.pdf

to the WHO CCCSP appoint two international accredited certifiers - one as certifier and one as co-certifier. They review the application and make their comments to the application.

When they are satisfied with the application the certifier make a site-visit of minimum two days. There is a model for the **site-visit**. The certifier in advance informs what the certifiers want to look at to verify the application or projects of special interests.

The community also have to make a presentation of its work for the other members of the network which will be available at the web page

[http://www.ki.se/csp/who safe communities network en.htm](http://www.ki.se/csp/who_safe_communities_network_en.htm)

. There is also a formula for that [Form B](#).

[http://www.ki.se/csp/pdf/guidelines/form b 2014.pdf](http://www.ki.se/csp/pdf/guidelines/form_b_2014.pdf)

When the certifiers judge that the community fulfils all the requirements to be member of the International Safe community Network they recommend the chair Leif Svanström, Professor Emeritus of the network that the community shall be designated.

The designation ceremony takes place in the community.

When you are ready to start the application process for Safe Community Membership Application [go to https://sms.oshc.hk/isccs/enrollment/agreement](https://sms.oshc.hk/isccs/enrollment/agreement) to enter the online application system.