Accidents in the broadest sense, which include intentional and unintentional events, are the leading cause of death after the first year of life in all developed countries, including Croatia. These are avoidable/preventable events, so their high frequency mortality and other serious consequences is all the more tragic.

Objective Analysis of data on child mortality caused by accidents in the Republic of Croatia over the period of 25 years.

Material and Methods Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Croatia processed by the Croatian Institute for public Health on mortality in children aged 0 to 19 in the period from 1995 to 2019 were analyzed. The following diagnoses according to the X International Classification of Diseases and Injuries are included: (I) Accidents-traffic accidents V01-V99, drowning W65-W74, suffocation W75-W84, falls W00-W19, burns X00-X09, X10-X19, poisoning X40-X49, weapons/explosive accidents W32-W40; (II) suicides – X60-X84; (III) murders X85-Y09. Absolute case numbers were analyzed by gender and age groups.

Results 3343 children aged 0-19 lost lives due to accidents – injuries in the period of 25 years in the Republic of Croatia. Over the years, a downward trend in mortality has been observed. The most common single causes of death were traffic accidents, 1643 (49%) suicides 594 (18%) and drowning 261 (8%).

Other common causes were present in smaller numbers and proportions: poisonings, suffocations, falls. Given the highest incidence, we analysed traffic accidents and suicides by age and gender. Traffic accidents were most prevalent in the 15-19 age group among boys. Suicides were also most common in the same age and gender group. In all age groups and according to all analyzed causes, the number of deaths is higher in boys/young men than girls. In the age group of 0-1 year the most common cause of death of all the causes was suffocation.

Conclusion positive trends in reducing the number of deaths of children due to accidents are encouraging, but Croatia still lags significantly behind the most developed countries. The data from the European Union the most common cause of death in the age group 0-14 are injuries, traffic accidents, murders and suicides, which is not in accordance with our results.

The EU countries Austria, Germany, Denmark, Norway and Sweden record the lowest rate of traffic accidents. Malta, Italy, Spain and England are the countries with the lowest number of recorded suicides. Unfortunately, Croatia is among the countries from the top of the list. Effective injury prevention in childhood may require different combinations of prevention policies, depending on epidemiological characteristics, such as the development of injury supervision and public education on injury awareness and prevention.
availability of pediatric care by counties in 2012 was above 90% in only 7/21 counties and above 80% in 4/21, while half of the counties had below 80% of children in pediatric care, ranging from 42-79%. In 2018, half of the counties achieved coverage of pediatric care above 90%, in 5/21 above 80% and another 5/21 with unsatisfactory coverage ranged from 52-77%. According to the health care network, another 49 pediatric teams are missing, of which 30 teams are needed for 10 counties with less than 90% coverage.  

Conclusion The Republic of Croatia is a signatory to international documents which are undertaken to provide all children with the maximum possible health care. For many years, it can be said traditionally, a model in which the pediatrician is the bearer of children’s health care at the primary level has been nurtured and developed since such model ensures high quality health care for children. This analysis showed that the counties with the largest cities had a sufficient coverage and occupancy with pediatric teams, while Slavonia, northwestern counties and Istria had less occupancy. Unevenness in the distribution of pediatric teams gradually decreased in the observed period and increasing number of teams ensured better availability and coverage of children. In the same period, we recorded extremely unfavorable demographic trends with declining birth rates and the emigration of young people, which resulted in a significant reduction in the number of preschool children. Although the number of pediatrics teams has increased, there has been no continuous education of new primary pediatricians, the age of active doctors is high and their retirement will again lead to insufficient availability of pediatric care in the next ten years. In order to ensure optimal and quality primary health care for children, it is necessary to plan new specializations of primary pediatricians, taking into account the geographical and traffic specific and the population of certain areas.

In the available recommendations and literature, breastfeeding of prematurely born infants and children with disabilities is interpreted as a protective factor of health and stable connection of the child and the mother. Researches on breastfeeding at risk groups of new born and premature infants indicate the need to further promote breastfeeding in the population of parents of premature infants, while researches of breastfeeding of children with disabilities in the Republic of Croatia are few.

In order to find out more about breastfeeding of children born prematurely and children diagnosed with developmental disabilities, in 2019, parents of children with developmental disabilities and premature babies were interviewed about breastfeeding after discharge from hospital.  

Objective to examine the relationship between the duration of breastfeeding and the term of childbirth and the type of developmental difficulties.

Methods 120 parents participated in the study whose children were 3.5 years old on average (M = 65.34 months, SD = 29.32), of which 74.2% boys and 25.8% girls. A semi-structured interview was conducted with the parents. Data analysis was performed using Fisher’s exact test.

The results of the research showed that the age until which the child was breastfed was related to the term of birth (F = 14.75, p < 0.001) and to the diagnosed disabilities in the child’s development (F = 11.56, p < 0.05). Children who were not breastfed at all were more likely to be premature (z = 3.3, p < 0.001) as opposed to breastfed children. Children who were breastfed shorter (up to 3 months) were more likely to be diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders and multiple difficulties (z = 1, 96, p < 0.05) in contrast to children who were breastfed longer (6 months to 1 year). Of the 120 children, none were breastfed for longer than a year.

Conclusion Breastfeeding support should be continuous, especially in the preterm babies and in the newborn babies with risks of developmental disabilities.

482 SIDS KNOWLEDGE AMONGST CROATIAN PRIMARY CARE PAEDIATRICIANS AND PARENTS

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To compare parental and primary health care paediatricians’ (PHCP) knowledge of SIDS risk factors.

In 2018, we conducted an online survey of parental knowledge of safe infant sleep and SIDS risk factors. A 46-item questionnaire for parents was designed based on the available scientific literature. Data collected included: respondent socio-demographic and infant characteristics, infant feeding and sleeping practices, advice parents received from their paediatrician on safe infant sleep, and parental knowledge of SIDS risk factors.

In Croatia, children, from birth to school-entry, are treated by their primary care paediatrician. Therefore, we conducted another similar survey to assess PHCP knowledge of SIDS risk factors in the Split-Dalmatia County (SDC), Dubrovnik-Neretva County (DNC) and Bjelovar-Bilogora County (BBC).

Paediatricians were sent an anonymous questionnaire by postal mail. Ethics approval was received from the University of Split School of Medicine.

Results of parental and PHCP knowledge of safe infant sleep have been published. At the CROATIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS 2020 in Zagreb we will present new findings comparing the knowledge of SIDS risk factors between parents and PHCP.

There is a need for systematic, evidence-based parental and PHCP education on safe infant sleep and SIDS in Croatia.

483 PEDIATRIC PRIMARY HEALTH CARE IN EARTHQUAKE-AFFECTED AREAS OF SISAK-MOSLAVINA COUNTY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC


Background The COVID-19 pandemic spread to Croatia on February 25, 2020, which required a change in the organization of health care institutions and the provision of health services.