Last fall, moved by incidents of gun violence across the country, OHSU faculty, staff, students and leaders joined in a commitment to address gun violence as a public health issue.

OHSU sees the impact of gun violence on both its employees and the communities it serves. We know that violence and its root causes affect your bottom line - from employee safety and wellness to increased health care costs and lost productivity.

As a health care institution, we treat the results of gun violence. Through the new OHSU-PSU School of Public Health, we see the opportunity to push back, pivot and move upstream to make a difference. Advocate for gun safety. Expand mental health services. Confront racial and gender inequities. Create more compassionate and equitable supports for employees and retirees. Build capabilities and resilience by strengthening communities.

This third of three community forums is focused on the role that business can play in educating and moving its workforce, constituents and community from beliefs about the inevitability of gun violence to its prevention.
FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

KEYNOTE


PANEL

Alisha Moreland-Capuia, M.D., executive director, Avel Gordly Center for Healing, and assistant professor, OHSU School of Medicine
Lori Morgan, M.D., president, Legacy Emanuel Medical Center
Liana Winett, Dr.P.H., M.C.H.E.S., associate professor, OHSU-PSU School of Public Health
Kathleen Carlson, Ph.D., Occupational Safety and Health Services researcher

REMARKS

Joe Robertson, M.D., M.B.A., president, OHSU
John Hunter, M.D., F.A.C.S., interim dean, OHSU School of Medicine, and chief clinical officer, OHSU Healthcare
Brian Gibbs, Ph.D., M.P.A., vice president, OHSU Equity and Inclusion, and associate professor, OHSU-PSU School of Public Health

GUN VIOLENCE IMPACTS YOUR TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE: MISSION, MONEY AND PEOPLE

SPRING 2017 — SITUATION ANALYSIS

On average, 456 people die annually from firearm injuries in Oregon, a rate of 11.7 per 100,000. The majority is suicides followed by homicides, and, more distantly, by legal intervention shootings and unintentional shootings. The highest firearm injury death rates occurred in non-Hispanic white males age 65 and older (38.7 per 100,000), due to a high suicide rate, and among young non-Hispanic African American males, ages 15-44 (34.8 per 100,000), due to a high homicide rate.

- Oregon Health Authority, Firearm Fatalities in Oregon, 2014

From 2006 to 2014, the cost of initial hospitalizations for firearm-related injuries averaged $734.6 million per year. Medicaid paid one-third and self-pay patients one-quarter of the financial burden. These figures substantially underestimate true health care costs.

- American Journal of Public Health, May 2017

The total costs associated with nonfatal injuries and deaths in the U.S. in 2000 due to violence (of which gun violence is a major category) were more than $70 billion. Most of this cost ($64.4 billion or 92 percent) was due to lost productivity, with $5.6 billion spent on medical care.


CHANGING THE PARADIGM — STATES WITH SMART GUN LAWS SAVE LIVES AND FUNDS

Wyoming, with an “F” rating in gun safety laws, has the nation’s highest rate of gun deaths and bears the highest gun violence costs per capita of any state. Gun violence costs Wyoming around $1,400 per resident every year – twice the national average.

By comparison, Hawaii, with an “A-” rating in gun safety laws, is among the two states with the nation’s lowest rate of gun deaths and had costs associated with gun violence of $234 per resident per year, about one-sixth of Wyoming’s.

- Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, San Francisco, Calif.

WE ALL PLAY A ROLE IN PREVENTING GUN VIOLENCE

Although firearm safety has been highly politicized, we know that it is first and foremost a public health issue. When motor vehicle collisions became a leading cause of mortality, auto manufacturers blamed drivers. When the health threat of tobacco emerged, tobacco companies denied the association between smoking and disease. Regulation in both industries decreased morbidity and mortality.

Firearm deaths are now tied with automobile accidents as the number one cause of death for children ages 1 to 19 in the U.S. It is time to learn from history and take action on firearm safety.

- Adapted from “Pragmatic Firearm Advocacy for Pediatricians,” commentary by Michelle Sandberg, M.D., and Nancy E. Wang, M.D., Journal of Hospital Pediatrics, June 2017