

University-led Initiative to Strengthen Firearm Injury Prevention Through Education, Outreach and Research

Team Members: Princess Ackland (PhD, MSPH); Rasha El-Rifai (MD); Trân Huỳnh (PhD, MPH, CIH); Reena Kartha (MS, PhD); Davis Seelig (DVM, PhD); Jop van Berlo (MD, PhD)

Background:

Firearm-related injuries and deaths affect many Minnesotans. 73.1% of firearm deaths were self-inflicted which preferentially affects rural areas (1.5-2x more likely). To address the high injury and mortality rates of firearms, Minnesota recently (January 2024) adopted the Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) law, which protects individuals who pose a danger to themselves or others from buying or possessing firearms. However, as the law is in its infancy in Minnesota, there are implementation gaps. We aimed to identify key barriers to ERPO implementation and make recommendations by which the UMN can become a leader in this space.

Recommendations:

We interviewed state and national experts (see below) to develop these recommendations.

- Coordinate a multidisciplinary community-engaged ERPO workshop. Include all stakeholders to understand needs, gaps, and available resources.
- Co-develop ERPO education and outreach resources, utilizing the broad UMN footprint, to improve awareness among students, professionals, and the public.
- Pilot an ERPO education and evaluation program. Start with two small catchment areas (rural and urban) and develop a plan for scaling up.

Interviewees:

- Prof. Megan Walsh, Gun Prevention Clinic, UMN Law School
- Lynne Borden, Assoc. Dean for Research & Outreach, UMN Extension
- Nicole Pokorney, UMN Extension
- Patricia Jewett, Assistant Professor, UMN School of Public Health
- Dr. Derek Lumbard, Trauma Surgeon, Hennepin Healthcare
- Rana S. Alexander, Assistant County Attorney, Hennepin County
- Dawn Bakst, Assistant County Attorney, Ramsey County

- Chris Tolbert, Executive Officer to the County Attorney's Office, Ramsey County
- Jordan Haltaufderheid, Chief of Staff, Minnesota Department of Public Safety
- Kim Parker, General Counsel, Minnesota Department of Public Safety
- Patrick Carter, Professor of Emergency Medicine and Co-Director of the University of Michigan Institute for Firearm Injury Prevention
- Maggiy Emery (Executive Director of Protect Minnesota)