Abstract

Dog bite injuries and fatalities are major public health problems nationwide. Alaska dog bite hospitalization rates are consistently higher than national rates, indicating that a health disparity exists. In Alaska dog bite injuries are inconsistently recorded and are not centrally reported. The objective of this study was to characterize dog bite injuries and victims in Alaskan communities for 2002-2012. A cross sectional study design was used in this first attempt to consolidate and analyze scattered statewide data regarding dog bites. Results showed that the vast majority of dog bites in Alaska went unreported, and confirmed previous research that the Alaska Native population and children aged 0-9 were disproportionately affected. This study was intended to provide an update of this public health problem for the State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services, Section of Epidemiology and to improve public and stakeholder knowledge.