

## \$600K NIH training grant renewed at RIH

*Funding for trauma and inflammation research training fellowship program*

PROVIDENCE – The Division of Surgical Research at Rhode Island Hospital successfully renewed funding for its trauma and inflammation research training fellowship from the National Institutes of Health. The \$600,000 award will support clinician-scientists studying trauma-related diseases and how the body reacts to them.

“Trauma is a leading cause of death and disability in the U.S.,” said **WILLIAM CIOFFI, MD**, chairman of the

department of surgery. “Because major injuries initiate a wide variety of responses within the human body, the study of traumatic injury and inflammation can advance understanding of all types of diseases and reactions outside of normal conditions. The capacity of well-trained individuals to simultaneously think as scientists and act as clinicians provides the most rapid and efficient path for the identification of new issues to investigate and to drive

forth cutting-edge therapies.”

“Rhode Island Hospital stands with only 17 other institutions in the U.S. that offer trauma, burn and peri-operative injury research training programs for postdoctoral candidates,” said Jorge E. Albina, MD, director of the program.

“We have created an exceptional and competitive fellowship that helps the providers bridge the gap between academia to bedside medicine,” said **ALFRED AYALA, PhD**, co-director. ❖

## Hasbro study shows protective eyewear mandate reduces eye and orbital injuries

*In high school field hockey players without increasing concussion risk*

PROVIDENCE – A study conducted by researchers at Hasbro Children’s Hospital, Boston Children’s Hospital, Fairfax (VA) County Public Schools and the University of Colorado School of Medicine has found that nationally mandated protective eyewear results in a greater than three-fold reduced risk of eye and orbital injuries in high school (HS) girls’ field hockey players without increasing rates of concussion.

The study, currently online and appearing in the September 2015 print issue of *Pediatrics*, examined injuries among high school field hockey players 14 to 18 years of age two seasons prior (2009–10, 2010–11) and two seasons following (2011–12, 2012–13) the NFHS implementation of a national mandate requiring the use of protective eyewear for all HS field hockey players, effective during the 2011–12 season.

Researchers found that the incidence of eye and orbital injuries was significantly higher in states without mandated protective eyewear (MPE) than in states with MPE (before the 2011/12 mandate) and the post-mandate group. There was no significant difference in concussion rates for the two groups. After the 2011/12 MPE, severe eye and orbital injuries were reduced by 67 percent and severe and/or medically disqualifying head and face injuries were reduced by 70 percent.

“The results of this study support a policy change regarding mandatory protective eyewear in field hockey at all amateur levels, both in practice and competition,” said **PETER KRIZ, MD**, the study’s principal investigator and co-author, and sports medicine physician at Hasbro Children’s Hospital. “Critics of protective eyewear in field hockey have voiced concerns that the eyewear increases concussion rates due to loss of peripheral vision and increased player-to-player contact. Our study found that concussion rates did

not change as a result of the national MPE.”

Dr. Kriz added, “Other youth sports such as baseball and softball are gradually adopting use of protective facemasks for batters, pitchers and infielders. Just watch how many batters in this summer’s Little League World Series tournament now wear a face protector.”

“Professional ice hockey has made significant strides in implementing mandated visor use over the past decade,” said Dr. Kriz. “In comparison, the governing organizations for amateur field hockey remain reluctant to endorse eye protection in amateur elite field hockey. Meanwhile developmental, college and national level field hockey coaches and programs have voiced concern that MPEs will jeopardize international recruitment efforts, as no other country mandates eyewear protection, and hurt the ability of the U.S. national teams to remain competitive internationally.” “We remain hopeful that our study results will persuade the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to mandate protective eyewear use among its student athletes,” he said. “Additionally, we are hoping to close some of the loopholes which permit middle- and high-school players to participate in games, practices, camps, tournaments and showcases without protective eyewear.”

Data for this study was collected from the National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance System, High School RIO™ (Reporting Information Online) and from Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools Athletic Training Program. The study was funded in part by Prevent Blindness America, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment. ❖