

CAPTURING PRODUCT INJURY DATA

***FOR TODAY'S NEEDS
WITH TODAY'S MEANS***

-hospitals or safety complaints?

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+ BSI Consumer network

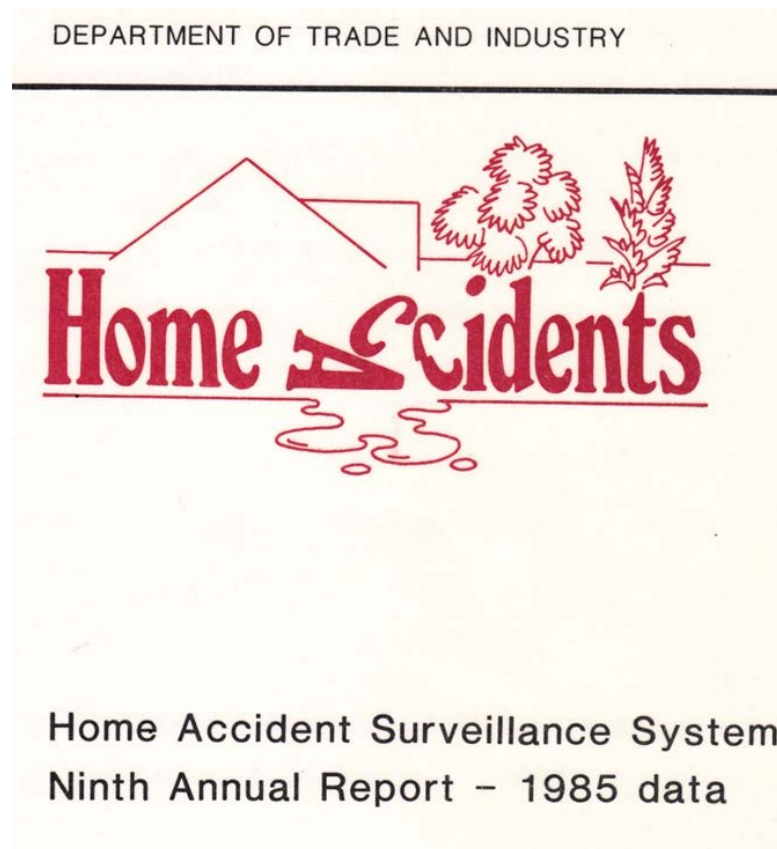
ELECTRICAL PRODUCT SAFETY CONFERENCE 2015

Injury data capture in hospitals



a HASS narrative text record

“Elasticated dog lead broke and recoiled and hit wrist”



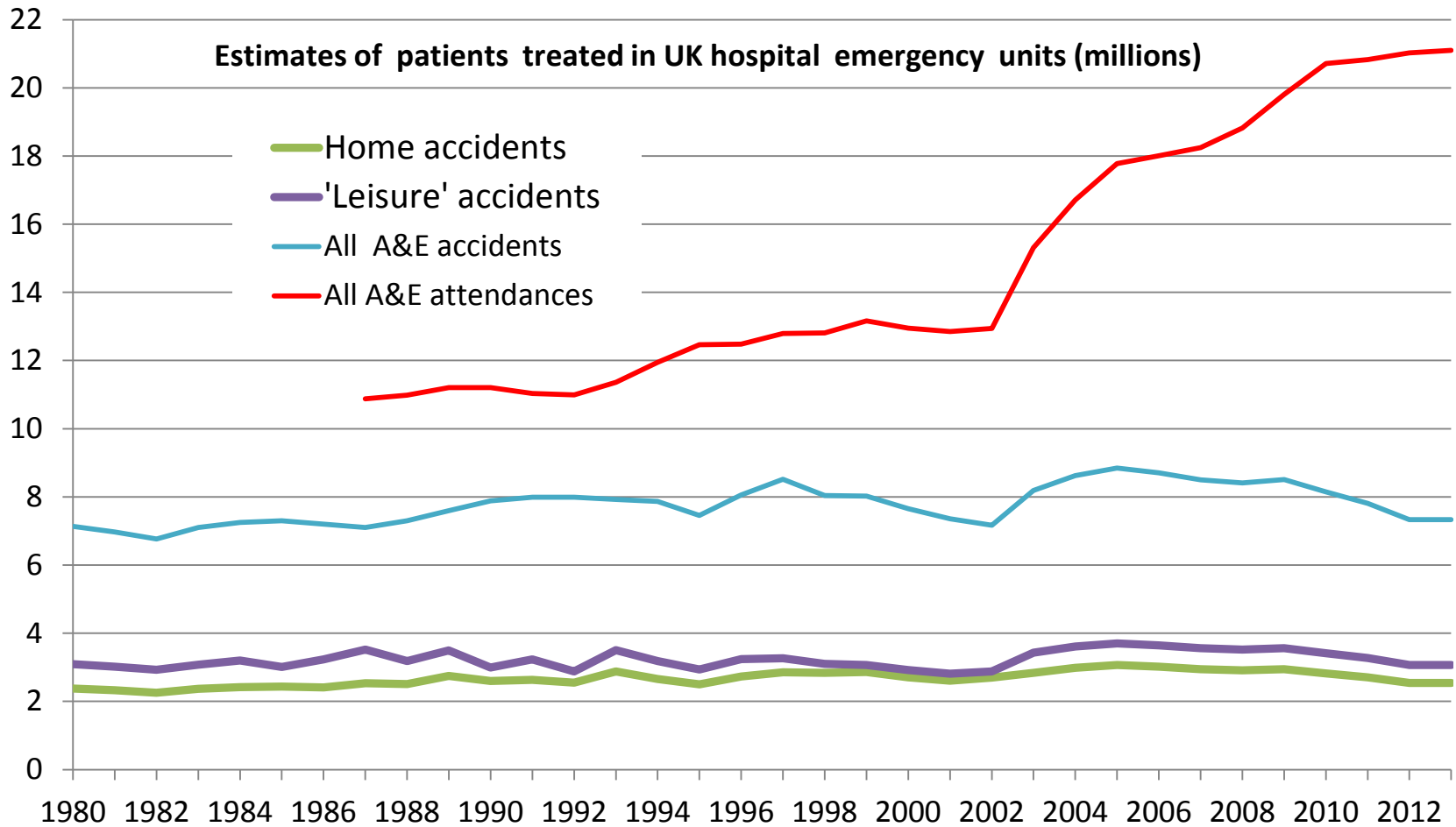
HASS data changed our understanding of:

- the range of everyday products involved in accidents
- the range of ways people interact with products
- which products are perceived as dangerous

It justified many new consumer safety measures

- No-fault product liability
- World's first General Safety Requirement
- European safety Directives
- New BS, EN & IEC standards for many products

What effect have all these product safety requirements had on UK hospital treated injuries?



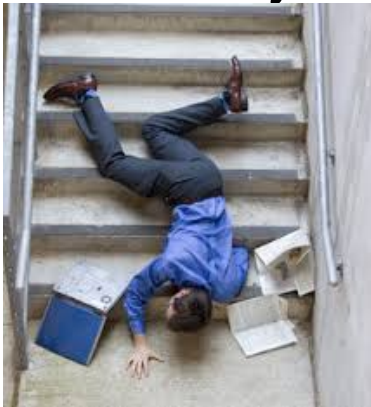
Why do product safety measures appear not to have had much impact on overall injury statistics in the UK ?

Most home and leisure accidents involved no consumer products.....

but items like:

-stairs, door, wall, floor, path, another person, dog, hot drink, ice, a piece of wood,

-or no recorded object of any sort



Meanwhile, most accidents that did involve a consumer product could not have been avoided by making it safer....

-particularly for some of the most frequent products like:

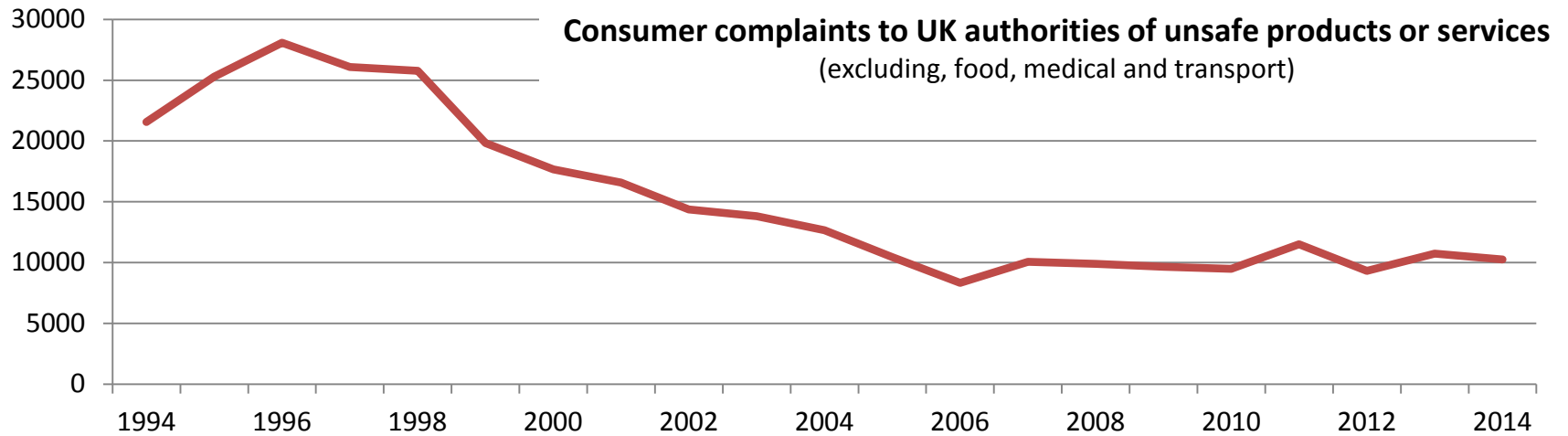
- beds, chairs, tables, carpets, cycles, toys, knives, nails



product recalls have gone up
home accidents have not gone down
and under 1 in 10 are due to unsafe products

*...so should we be looking for other sources
of product injury data?*

For many years UK enforcement authorities collated annual statistics of safety complaints they received from consumers



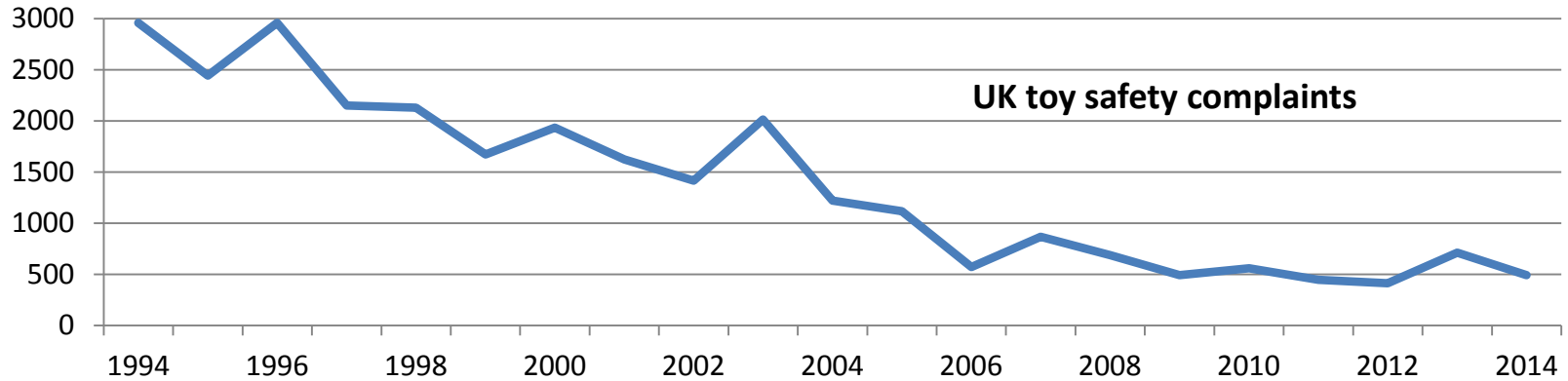
What these statistics show is a decline of >50% in product safety complaints since the mid 1990s

(which was when many new European standards appeared)

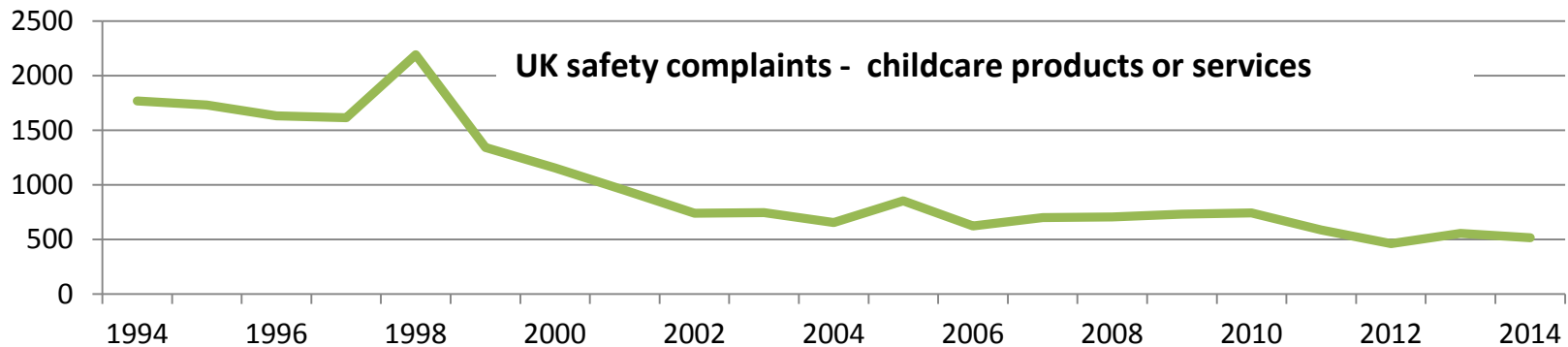
(Note however that the overall trend has levelled out for the last decade - **there is still work to do!**)

Complaint statistics provide evidence that Directives and standards had progressive effects in some sectors

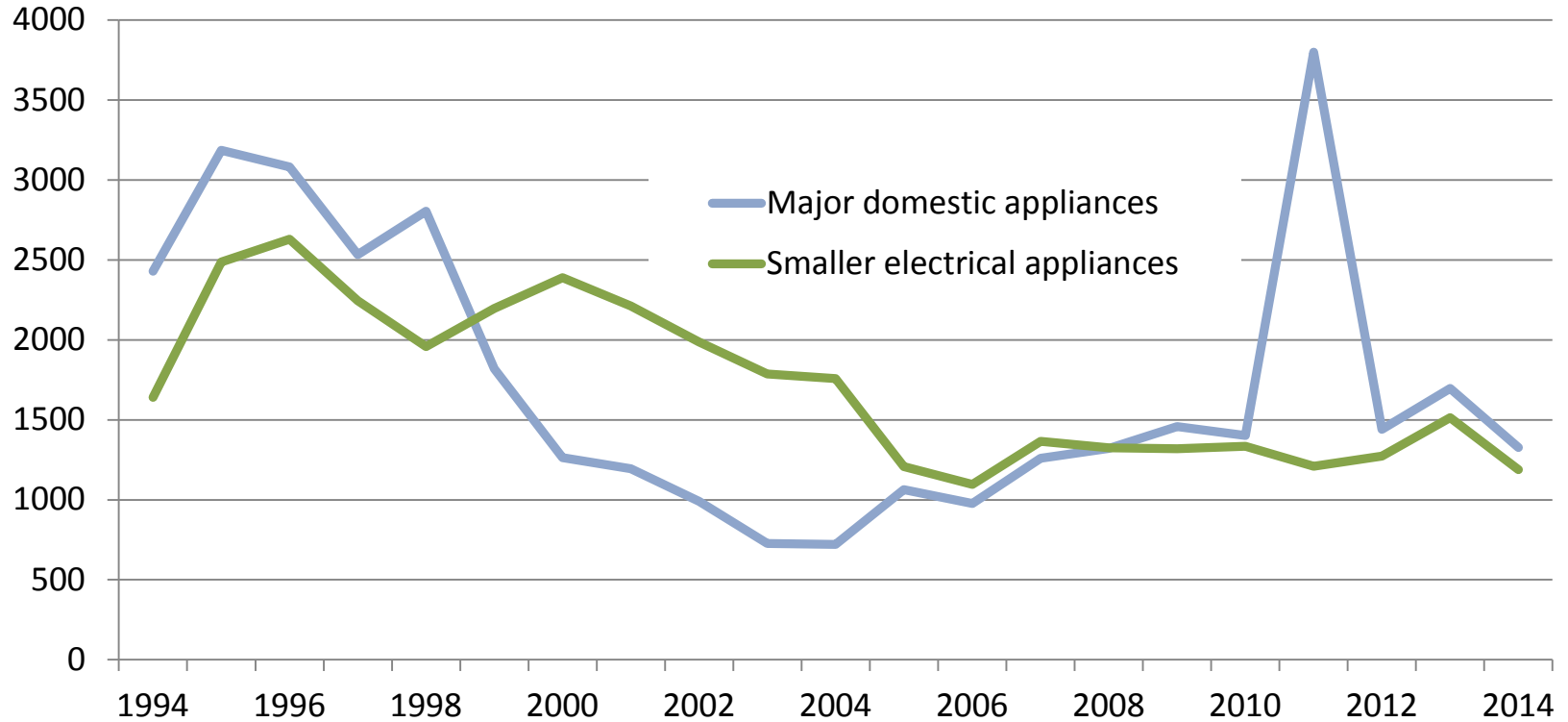
- eg on toys



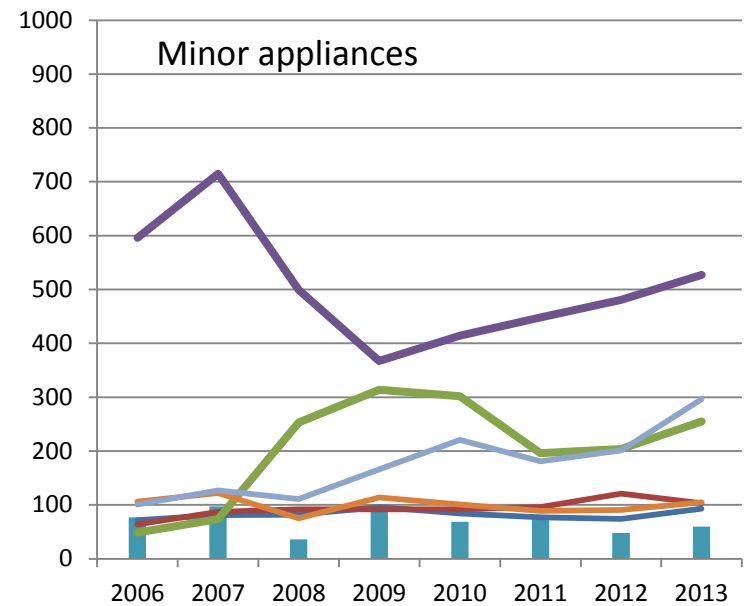
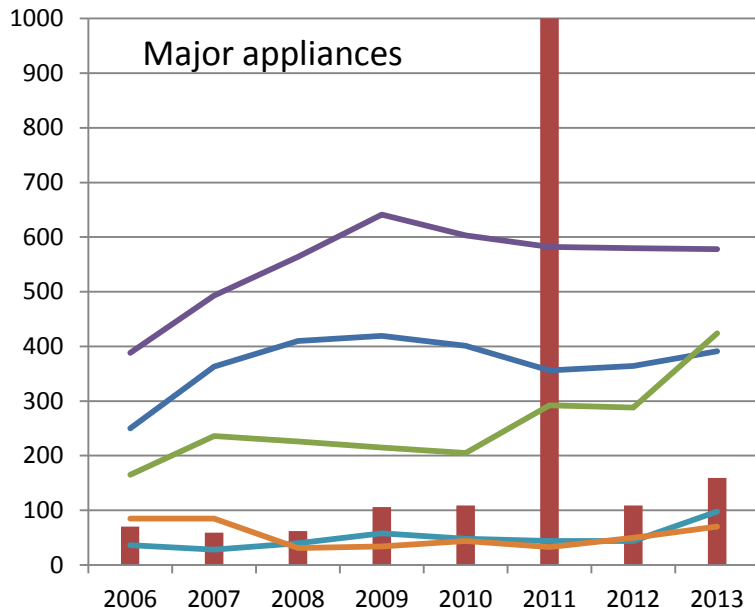
- and on child care products



..although the decline has been less consistent for some others – eg domestic appliances



- trends for individual appliances change from year to year



these statistical trends suggest the safety of some products is inconsistent - but what action is needed?

To identify which of these products could
be made safer

- which by **corrective action**
- and which by **revising standards**

we need more than statistics

- we need to be able to read
narrative accounts of incidents
that identify brands, models and
nature of the safety defect



consumer helpline

03454 04 05 06



Consumer Direct/CAB phone line database record

"Caller's daughter ran through a string door curtain and got caught, almost strangling her self. The string has cut into her neck and caused a rope burn effect. Country Club door curtain. Urban Life 90 X 200cm string design made from polyester. No safety warnings on packet."

File a Report

Please follow the steps below to begin your report to the [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission](#).

*** = Required**

▶ What information do I need to complete my Report?

* 1) Select Who You Are

Please Select



▶ Why do you need this?



Website data entry by a consumer
(US saferproducts.gov)

"I was using a Farberware serrated kitchen knife to slice off a section of watermelon and without warning the plastic knife handle snapped. Photo link [here.](#)"



REPORT | 7/16/2014 | 20140623-CC29E-2147443445

Norelco electric shaver. A cutting head failed and a sharp piece of metal ...

Incident Description: Norelco electric shaver. A cutting head failed and a sharp piece of metal protruded from the cutting head and cut my neck.

Business Comments:

(7/10/2014) This product meets all applicable safety and regulatory requirements. The consumer has been contacted and we are retrieving the product for investigation.

REPORT | 7/10/2014 | 20140515-5C5D3-1403312

On approximately 12/20/13, the consumer sustained burns while using the hand ...

Incident Description: On approximately 12/20/13, the consumer sustained burns while using the hand held hair curlers. The curler has settings of 310, 330, 360 & 400 degrees. The curler had been plugged into the outlet for approximately 5 minutes and on the 330 degree setting, ... [\(More\)](#)

REPORT | 11/26/2012 | 20121029-837CB-2147462415

My daughter was plugging in a Cricket Friction Free Model LN-109. The cord ...

Incident Description: My daughter was plugging in a Cricket Friction Free Model LN-109. The cord separated from the plug causing an electric shock. The burn was minor because the circuit breaker tripped. The product does NOT have a third party certification(i.e. UL listed). I ... [\(More\)](#)

WHY IS “OPEN DATA” BETTER?

- HASS showed that if stakeholders are allowed to mine injury data then **more accident patterns are discovered** than if analysis is restricted to paid staff....
- ...and product safety data appears more often in the media -**increasing influence on decisions** of designers, importers and retailers
- Today many citizens are used to sharing experiences on review sites – but expect a **two-way flow**
- Promoting open data is backed by **UK and EU policy**

Consumer entry of product injury data online would be cheaper than a new HASS

- **Cheaper to capture data** – saving A&E staff time
- **Cheaper to develop and maintain IT** – for a single-issue website database than when adding software to existing hospital IT systems
- **Cheaper to exploit as an information source**- an online open database does not need to employ staff to run searches or publish statistics
- **Cheaper to manage** – information that consumers voluntarily enter - separately from their hospital records - can be managed by an independent charity

Hospital registration

- Large sample of injured population interviewed (<10% due to unsafe products)
- Details of incident limited by time pressures on staff
- Access to incident details often constrained by medical ethics and privacy laws
- Statistics do not allow new issues to be spotted early. Too many cases to read through.
- Insufficient detail for needs of enforcement, standards revision or court evidence
- Obstacles and costs to re-contacting a patient to study an incident in-depth

Consumer complaints

- Sample self-limited to products considered unsafe (and to motivated citizens)
- Usually describe brand and defect. Photos possible
- User consents to use of details (except identity) to make products safer
- Every complaint goes to enforcement agency who can search for similar cases
- Can distinguish compliance issues from need to improve a standard
- Consumer provides e-mail or phone contact details
- AND LOWER COSTS

Where is today's technology in A&E?



- Many hospitals offer free Wi-Fi for patient's smart phones and tablets to help reduce anxiety while waiting for treatment..
- ..so when logging-in to the Wi-Fi patients could be invited to make a safety complaint direct to the enforcement authority
- ..and those who agree could be re-contacted later at home to add details they could not recall in hospital (eg model numbers and purchase date) or upload photographs



Conclusion

What the UK needs today is a
product injury database
using **today's consumer technology** systems
to capture detailed safety complaints
direct from consumers
and **hospitals can be a good place to do that.**

THANK YOU

Summary

- Hospital injury statistics established the need for product safety laws and standards but do not show how effective they have been because most accidents are not caused by unsafe products
- Preventing most home and leisure accidents needs repeated public education – but not large annual samples and statistics
- Complaints databases focus on **products consumers think should be made safer** - but are fragmented and hidden
 - open access would facilitate identification of more patterns among the diversity of products , defects and hazards
- **Detailed accounts** of incidents are necessary to distinguish compliance and liability issues from need to amend a standard
- **Model numbers and photos of defects** will only be recorded if consumers can enter details online (as well as by phone)
- With today's mobile devices many **consumer accident patients could be 'signed-up' to an on-line injury database while waiting in hospital** - and be re-contacted to add product details later at home