The CAPNET Multi-center Data Set for Child Physical Abuse: Rationale, Methods and Scope

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BACKGROUND: The pediatric subspecialty of Child Abuse Pediatrics (CAP) was certified by the American Board of Medical Subspecialties in 2006. Relative to its impact on pediatric health, CAP-focused research has been relatively under-funded. Multi-center networks related to CAP-focused research have made important advances, but have been limited in scope and duration. CAPNET is multi-center network whose mission is to support CAP-focused research. OBJECTIVE: To describe the rationale, development, and scope of the CAPNET research network infrastructure, the CAPNET data registry and associated data resources. METHODS: Based on existing priorities for CAP-focused research, we used consensus building and iterative testing to establish inclusion criteria, common data elements, data quality assurance, and data sharing processes for children with concerns of physical abuse. RESULTS: We describe the rationale, methods and intended scope for the development of the CAPNET research network and data registry. CAPNET is currently abstracting data for children <10 years (120 months) old who undergo sub-specialty evaluation for physical abuse at 10 US pediatric centers (approximately 4000 evaluations/year total) using an online data capture form. Data domains include: demographics; visit timing and providers, medical/social history, presentation, examination findings, laboratory and radiographic testing, diagnoses, outcomes, and data for contact children. We describe the methods and criteria for collecting and validating data which are broadly available to CAP investigators. CONCLUSIONS: CAPNET represents a new data resource for the CAP research community and will increase the quantity and quality of CAP-focused research.

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