

PRESS RELEASE

MAJOR TRAUMA AUDIT REPORT FINDS THAT MANY SERIOUS INJURIES IN CHILDREN ARE PREVENTABLE

16th MARCH 2021: Professor Conor Deasy, Clinical Lead for Major Trauma Audit (MTA) and Dr Ciara Martin, Consultant in Paediatric Emergency Medicine, today launch the Major Trauma Audit Paediatric Report 2014-2019 at the Major Trauma Audit Webinar 2021. The report focuses on paediatric patients who have suffered a major trauma accident over a six-year-period in Ireland. Falls, road traffic accidents and burns account for many causes of these injuries in children and present an obvious opportunity for injury prevention.

From 2014-2019, data was collected on 1,382 cases from the majority of the 26 hospitals involved in the audit. The consequences of major trauma on children can be far reaching with many suffering life changing or life threatening injuries.

Launching this year's report, Professor Deasy commented "The publication of this report presents the first comprehensive overview of major trauma in children in the Republic of Ireland. The significance of this data and timeliness of the report will allow for the Trauma System in Ireland to be reconfigured to meet the needs of adults and children. This report also provides advice that everyone can use to prevent injuries in children."

KEY FINDINGS

- Paediatric major trauma patients made up 5% (n=1382) of the overall major trauma population from 2014 to 2019.
- Paediatric major trauma peaks in the first 2 years of life, with more than one-quarter (26%, n=366) of all serious injuries in children occurring in this age group.
- Males account for a majority (63%, n=874) of paediatric major trauma cases.
- Falls from less than 2 m (termed 'low falls'), road traffic collisions (RTCs) and burns account for 71% (n=985) of all paediatric major trauma patients.
- Non-accidental injury was recorded in 5% (n=64) of all paediatric major trauma patients, and accounted for 34% (n=47) of major trauma in children aged under 1 year.
- Home was recorded as the most common place of injury for paediatric major trauma patients (45%, n=628).
- The limbs and head are the most common body regions injured in all paediatric major trauma patients, at 32% each (n=439 and n=440, respectively).
- Paediatric major trauma presentations were more common in the afternoon and evening between 2.00pm and 9.00pm.
- Paediatric major trauma patients were most commonly admitted during the summer months.
- Although the majority of paediatric major trauma patients were brought to hospital by ambulance (55%, n=578), it is notable that 41% (n=431) were brought in by car.
- Many injured children were transferred to another hospital for ongoing management (57%, n=994).
- There were 57 children (4%) who died during hospital admission due to major trauma.

- The most common single mechanism of injury leading to death in paediatric major trauma patients was road trauma (32%, n=18).
- Eighty-three percent (n=1147) of paediatric major trauma patients were discharged directly home from hospital.
- Only 1% (n=19) paediatric major trauma patients were discharged to rehabilitation.

Dr Ciara Martin, Consultant in Paediatric Emergency Medicine, Children’s Health Ireland said “This is a very important audit and as 5%, or 1 in 20, of all major traumas are paediatric, I welcome the opportunity to tell their story through the data presented in this Report. Paediatric patients range in age from 0 to 16 years and each group has unique requirements and requires special trauma considerations. This data helps us to work with the public and policy makers on prevention as well as on pathways that will improve immediate care and rehabilitation. As we move to one major trauma centre for children in the new children’s hospital, the data published today and supporting ongoing audit will make a difference for paediatric trauma care in Ireland.”

Naomi Fitzgibbon, Patient / Public Representative on the MTA Governance Committee added “It is good to see that prevention of injuries is a big focus for this report as children are society’s responsibility to protect. We can all play a role be that on our roads, at home on farms or in other public domains. The new children’s hospital will be able to use this data to ensure that all facilities required to meet the needs of children with major injuries can be achieved.”

Copies of the report will be available to download from www.noca.ie.

ENDS

NOTES TO THE EDITOR:

About NOCA

NOCA was established in 2012 to create sustainable clinical audit programmes at national level. NOCA enables those who manage and deliver healthcare to improve the quality of care through national clinical audit. NOCA is funded by the Health Service Executive Quality Improvement Team, governed by an independent voluntary board and operationally supported by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

SPOKESPERSONS

Professor Conor Deasy Clinical Lead Major Trauma Audit	Dr Ciara Martin Consultant in Paediatric Emergency Medicine Children’s Health Ireland	Naomi Fitzgibbon Public / Patient Interest Representative Major Trauma Audit
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Professor Conor Deasy will officially launch the Major Trauma Audit Paediatric Report 2014-2019 at 10am on the MTA Webinar. [Registration link here](#)

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