Google Translation of Swedish Pediatric Society Statement in response to SBU’s Report

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Press release:  Swedish Pediatric Society

NEWS

KNOWLEDGE SUPPORT
Information to the BLF's members of the SBU report "Skakvåld against children under 1 year"
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SBU has conducted a systematic literature review entitled "Skakvåld against children under 1 year". Knowledge area is set location for the pediatrician to professionally meet children who are suspected victims of violence. Representatives of the Swedish Paediatric Society's Board of Directors and Delföreningen for children in distress have had dialogue with the SBU to contribute our perspective. SBU's aim has been to respond to the security "triad" (the combination of subdural hematoma, retinal hemorrhage, and brain dysfunction) can be explained by skakvåld. The conclusions are that "there is insufficient scientific evidence to assess the diagnostic accuracy of the Triad to identify skakvåld, and that there is limited scientific evidence that triad and thus its subcomponents can occur at skakvåld." Pediatric Society welcomes SBU's initiative, but also notes that the report has flaws that can lead to children not getting their needs for support and protection are met. We have to SBU made the following main points:

1. SBU's choice of question is not rooted in everyday clinical practice. Pediatricians do not value the presence of the "triad". The investigation for suspected abuse infants include a broad multi-professional differential diagnosis based on clinical history, physical examination, x-ray and laboratory examinations.

2. Skakvåld as a concept is inappropriate because it indicates the etiology and excludes other types of violence children suffered. The report ethical analysis by SMER drawn the same conclusion. Of pediatricians in Sweden and internationally used rather the concept of abusive head trauma (see references below).

3. The report concerns a subset of violence against infants. We are concerned that this will impact in areas that are not valued and have provided input and ideas to SBU information material to reduce this risk.

4. There are methodological problems with the report’s execution. One example is that the SBU had higher scientific requirements for articles linking skakvåld to the "triad" necessary characters compared to alternative explanations. The literature about alternative explanations have not undergone SBU's quality review. We as children medical colleagues in the US, the UK and the Nordic countries expressed desire for an international peer review before publication. SBU has announced that this will be done afterwards.

5. The ethical analysis found that the child's interests a top priority in many respects. The importance of the social services report cases where children are suspected fare badly stressed.
The analysis, however, include the following statement: "A decision on the application is associated with significant consequences for the child as well as guardians and must therefore be well-founded and well thought out. Such a decision should be taken after consultation with at least one other doctor. "We want to emphasize that pediatricians, like all health care workers, according to the Social Services Act has an unchanged individual responsibility to report concerns about a child suspected fare badly.

6. We have requested the national guidelines for medical management of suspected abused children. This is to ensure equal medical investigations of the highest quality and equitable care for children in Sweden.

Paediatric Society's main message is that it is dangerous to shake the baby, that violence against infants occurs, that children, even if it is difficult to understand are injured and killed by parents, and children from the doctor's responsibility is to make a careful medical assessment and safeguard the life of the child and protection.

The report can be found here: http://www.sbu.se/sv/publikationer/SBU-utvärderar/skakvald—triadens-roll-vid-medicinsk-utredning-av-misstankt-skakvald/

If you have questions, please get to the board or to Delföreningen for children in distress.