



Influence of Early Childhood Burns on School Performance: An Australian Population Study

The Challenge

The challenge of this project was to find out whether burn injuries effected children's performance in school tests. It was noted that burn injuries are more common in children from a socioeconomic disadvantaged background. The researched looked to see if severe and more extensive burns increased the risk of poor school outcomes as well as addressing how children with burn injuries should be supported even after the burns have physically healed.

How the PHRN Infrastructure Helped

This was a population linkage study using routinely collected data from health and educational records for all children born between 2000 and 2006 in the state of NSW, Australia, and who were hospitalised for a burn injury in this period. The Centre for Health Record Linkage (CHeReL) performed the data linkage required for this study.

The Result

The project findings indicated that the majority of childhood burn injuries occur before the start of formal schooling and that children who are hospitalised for burns perform more poorly in curriculum based testing even after accounting for family and socioeconomic disadvantage. The researchers concluded that the rehabilitation of children with burn injuries must address school performance to decrease any longterm adverse societal impact of burns.

Reference

Azzam N, Oei J, Adams S, et al. Influence of early childhood burns on school performance: an Australian population study. *Archives of Disease in Childhood* 2018;103:444-451.
<https://adc.bmj.com/content/103/5/444>