

FAN Conference Call

September 2, 2010 2-3p.m. EDT

Led by:

EMSC National Resource Center
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Participating Grantees:

Elizabeth Davy, WI
Shauna Hatton-Ward, UT
Mark Johnson, AK
Melissa Krall, NV
Amanda Moatz, MD
Jean Rickerson, WA

NRC Staff: Gayathri Jayawardena and Ian Weston

FAN Activity Highlight: Washington Promotes Sport-related Concussion Education

EMSC FAN Representative Jean Rickerson (Washington EMSC program) spoke about her experience with concussions, recalling how her 16-year-old son suffered a traumatic brain injury during a high school football game. It took more than four-months for her son to fully recover from his injury. During that time, she learned just how widespread the lack of concussion education there was. Unable to find the resources she needed, Jean created SportsConcussions.org, a website to educate others about the seriousness of concussions in youth sports. Recently, she began providing resources to pre-hospital providers.

Jean recommends that FAN representatives ask local school boards about their concussion policy for contact sports, as football is not the only sport where players are at risk for concussions. In addition to football, girls soccer is the next leading sport where players frequently experience a concussion.

According to Jean, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFSHSA) has a concussion policy, however only 26 states comply. Therefore, several states still have no regulations for contact sports. "It is important to educate parents, coaches, players, and prehospital providers to ensure compliance with NFSHSA or to ensure some type of school policy in place," said Jean.

The Back to School season is an opportune time for FAN representatives to educate local communities on concussions in youth. Among the more than 38 million boys and girls who participate in organized youth sports in the U.S. today, concussions are one of the most commonly reported injuries.

Resources to Help Jumpstart Concussion-related Activities

Ian Weston discussed the following helpful resources to assist FAN representatives who are interested in leading a similar campaign.

CDC's "Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports." In 2007, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) collaborated with 26 leading health, sports, and national organizations, to launch the national education initiative "Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports." The campaign targets youth and high school sports coaches, parents, athletes, and health care professionals, and provides important information on preventing, recognizing, and responding to concussions.

To help spread the word among your local community, visit the CDC [website](#) for a variety of facts sheets (English & Spanish) targeting [coaches, athletes and parents](#) along with a [training module](#) for coaches and medical professionals. You may also call the CDC to request a toolkit that includes the following:

- An introductory letter from CDC;
 - A fact sheet for coaches;
 - A fact sheet for parents (in English and Spanish);
- A fact sheet for athletes (in English and Spanish);
- A clipboard with concussion facts for coaches;
- A magnet with concussion facts coaches and parents;
 - A poster with concussion facts for coaches and sports administrators; and
- A quiz for coaches, athletes, and parents to test their concussion knowledge (in English and Spanish).

AAP Study on Sport-Related Concussion in Children and Adolescents. The September 2010 issue of *Pediatrics* featured the clinical report, "[Sport-Related Concussion in Children and Adolescents](#)," this study recognizes that although extensive research on concussions has provided medical professionals with a better understanding of the "symptomatic course and risk of potential long-term complications from concussions," there is very little to no research focused on the pediatric athlete. This study outlines the current state of knowledge on pediatric and adolescent sport-related concussions and examines other organizations such as the Canadian Paediatric Society, which has published guidelines on the management of the pediatric concussion.

According to the report, "Young athletes are more susceptible to the effects of a concussion because their brains are still developing... Although preventing all concussions is unlikely, there are several ways to reduce the risk, including protective gear (such as helmets and mouth guards), adhering to the rules of the sport, identifying athletes at risk, and educating parents, teachers, athletes, school administrators and trainers about the dangers of concussions." For more information and to better understand the symptoms and risk of long-term complications, read [AAP Updates Guidelines on Sport-related Concussion](#).

National Preparedness Month

The National Resource Center announced that September is National Preparedness Month. The Resource center suggests that FAN representatives who are interested in participating

in the event access the [National Preparedness Month Online Toolkit](#) available through the Ready.gov website.

The EMSC National Resource Center encourages FAN members to get involved in their local community to educate and increase readiness as it plays a vital role in the EMS community. Visit the EMSC National Resource Center [website](#) for several downloadable resources.

Performance Measure Redevelopment

Ian Weston noted that the federal EMSC Program has hired a committee of consultants to help develop the next round of EMSC performance measures, which are set to begin in 2012 and extend through 2017.

Though some of the new measures will be similar to the current measures, states that have successfully met their annual goals will now have the opportunity to begin work on advanced measures. These advanced measures include opportunities for states to evaluate and document quality improvement programs within their hospitals and EMS agencies. The committee is also spending its time redeveloping the annual target goals to ensure states can continue their momentum to meet these goals.

Of particular concern to FAN representatives is [Performance Measure 76](#), which deals with inter-facility transfer guidelines. In redeveloping this measure, the consultants feel that an advanced measure focusing on the need for family-centered care is needed. The consultants are seeking input from FAN members to help them develop a goal and components to this advanced measure. Interested FAN members should contact Ian Weston at iweston@cnmc.org. Comments and suggestions are due no later than Friday, September 24.

The General Federation of Women's Club (GFWC)

Ian Weston provided an update on GFWC activities. For many years, GFWC has worked with state EMSC programs to conduct fundraising activities to support the purchase of pediatric medical equipment for local EMS agencies.

The initial partnership began in 2002 and involved the Oconomowoc Junior Woman's Club (OJWC), a local chapter of the national General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), and the Wisconsin EMSC Advisory Board. Together they created and funded "Pediatric Jump Kit bags" and placed them in every ambulance in Waukesha County. Today, the partnership has raised more than \$300,000, and approximately 65% of the states EMS agencies have access to the bags.

The EMSC National Resource Center encourages EMSC grantees and FAN members to communicate with their local GFWC chapters to encourage the development of this partnership. For more information on GFWC's global mission or its local chapters, visit: <http://www.gfwc.org/gfwc/default.asp?SnID=964740991>.

Questions/Comments

Q: What diagnostic test can detect a concussion?

A: *Currently, there is none; however, a functional MRI is the closest diagnostic test, but is not utilized widely. There are certain blood tests that may detect certain biomarkers in the blood after a concussion; however that is still in testing mode. The only option at the moment are the neurophysiological tests. Many schools are offering this computer test to athletes prior to the start of the sports season, to gather baseline data in case an athlete experiences a concussion. The test can only be administered by a medical professional.*

Q: Those States that have laws, what exactly are they regulating?

A: *Each State law is different. The most important aspect is if a school athlete (under the age of 18) experiences or thinks they have experienced a concussion during a game, they must be removed from the game immediately. They also may not return to the field without appropriate medical authorization. Massachusetts law requires parents to watch the CDC video. A U.S. Senator from New Jersey has introduced national legislation to set standards for all states. Currently only seven states have laws. Sample legislation is available on Jean's website.*

Q: Is there a "how to guide" on Jean's website?

A: *At the moment no, but feel free to contact Jean for further details or ideas. She may also place you in contact with other states that have championed this endeavor.*

Q: Is there any leniency on the timeline [Advanced Measure]?

A: *The consultants just received the approval to present this to the FAN group, earlier this week. Unfortunately, due to the length approval process, this date cannot be moved.*

C: Since Shauna Hatton-Ward's (UT) presentation at the Annual Program Meeting on Medical Information Health System, the program has "exploded" in the State of Utah. Her current participation in a Native American Summit has granted her authorization to enter 43 different tribal groups in Utah and to view up-to-date medical information on their children that can provide EMS providers with updated medical information prior to transport.