

A Multifaceted Approach in the Development of a Child Physical Abuse Clinical Pathway



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Background

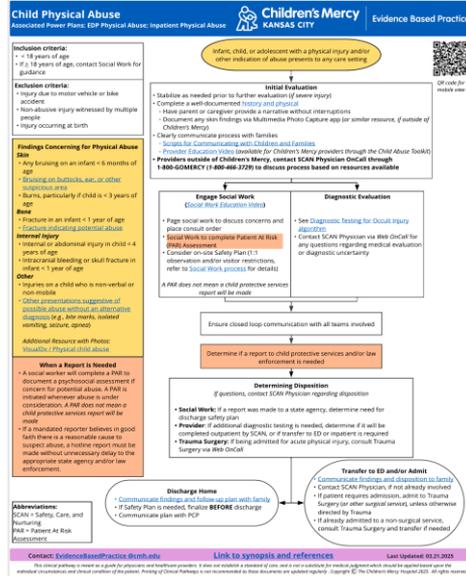
- Diagnosing child abuse is inherently complex
- Uncertainties and challenging conversations may lead to missteps that compromise a child's safety
- Identifying the need for improvement, interventions were implemented over the past four years. However, a unified, easily accessible guide for medical staff was still lacking

Aims

- Improving early identification of child physical abuse
- Decreasing variation in the evaluation process
- Effectively discussing concerns and findings with caregivers
- Ensuring timely support for affected children and their families

Project Description

- Multi-disciplinary team of experts and end users developed:
 - **Algorithms:** Medical management, including when to involve social work and child abuse specialist
 - **Order sets:** Tailored to the child's developmental stage and specific injuries
 - **Education on communication with families:**
 - "Dos and don'ts" when discussing potential child abuse
 - Written sample scripts
 - Brief videos exemplifying communication strategies



Measures

Pre: May '23-Aug '24
Post: Sept '24-Current

	Pre	Post
Clinical pathway views	N/A	2,557
Order set use	N/A	360
Abnormality tracker events	78	61

Lessons Learned

- Providing clear, step-wise recommendations reduces uncertainty and unwarranted variation
- A publicly available pathway shared by all settings helps optimize care
- "Just in time" education is welcomed by staff facing difficult conversations. Embedding this guidance helps staff communicate with clarity, transparency, and empathy

