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Attorney General DeWine Announces \$1 Million Grant to Ohio Children's Hospitals

Medical research grant will study "sentinel injuries" in children from zero to six months of age

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced that his office is giving a \$1 million dollar medical research grant to the Ohio Children's Hospital Association to study "sentinel injuries" in children age zero to six months. Sentinel injuries are relatively minor injuries that should prompt concerns for possible child abuse, but are sometimes missed by the healthcare provider. Examples of the types of minor injuries include oral injuries and bruises.

"Over 30,000 Ohio children are involved in a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect each year," said Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine. "By studying these injuries in children from zero to six months we hope to detect patterns early in order to help prevent, diagnose, care and treat abused children."

There is limited published literature on this subject, but a recent study in Pediatrics reported on a hospital's experience with nearly 200 abused children and found that almost 1 in 3 had with a reported history of a "sentinel injury", many of which had been missed by the healthcare provider and should have prompted concern for abuse.

"Ohio's children's hospitals have a proven track record of working collaboratively to improve child health in our state - and we each have efforts designed to prevent and treat the abuse of children - yet this will be the first time the hospitals have worked together on this particular issue. We know we can get results - and save children's lives in the process," said Steve Allen, M.D., CEO, Nationwide Children's Hospital and a member of the board of the Ohio Children's Hospital Association.

The grant will involve six Ohio's children's hospitals – Akron Children's, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Dayton Children's, Nationwide Children's Hospital, ProMedica Toledo Children's and UH/Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital. Nationwide Children's Hospital will be leading the collaborative, three-year effort. Grant funding for the project comes from lawsuit settlement funds.

The goals of the study are:

- To establish a baseline frequency of missed “sentinel injuries”
- To develop and disseminate medical interventions to reduce the frequency of missed “sentinel injuries”
- To measure the impact of medical interventions on the frequency of missed “sentinel injuries”

The project will consist of three waves, each lasting 12 months

- Year one will include data from each of the six children’s hospitals
- Year two will include data from regional hospitals throughout Ohio that provide care for children
- Year three will include data from large primary care pediatric practices across Ohio

“Ohio’s six children’s hospitals work hard every day to care for our youngest patients,” said Nick Lashutka, President of the Ohio Children’s Hospital Association. “This study will help us learn about injuries and the care, treatment and prevention of child abuse.”