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Into the Pandemic and Out of the Fire?

Sophie Green¹, Dominic Ronan², David Ralston²

¹Sheffield Children's Hospital, ²Sheffield Teaching Hospitals

Aim: The Covid-19 pandemic has seen various government restrictions on all aspects of daily life. We assessed whether these lifestyle alterations have affected the number, severity and presentation of burns seen at a Paediatric Burns Unit.

Methods: We looked at Paediatric Burns admissions to Plastic Surgery during the Covid-19 pandemic of March 2020 to Jan 2021 (DC), as well as comparison data prior to Covid-19 from April 2019 to February 2020 (PC). We also looked at specific periods of national lockdown. Using data from our electronic records we looked at varying aspects of a patient's journey.

Results: In total 788 cases were admitted to the Burn's team from April 19 - January 21. The mean age of patients both DC and PC were 4.7 years with the mean during the first lockdown of 5. The time to presentation PC was 2.6 days, DC was 1.79 days and 2.4 days during the first lockdown. This was not significant ($p=0.2$). The median total body surface area (TBSA) was <1% in both PC and DC patients. Scalds made up 53% of the first lockdown injuries, this had no statistically significant difference as compared to PC and DC injuries (48% and 46% respectively).

Conclusions: Overall burns admissions during the Covid-19 pandemic did not significantly change as compared to the previous year. This contrasts published adult results, which demonstrates reduced burns admissions during Covid-19. We suggest this may be due to unchanged causative factors in paediatric burns which are predominantly found in domestic lockdown environments.