



SUMMARY AND COMMENT | EMERGENCY MEDICINE

 PRACTICE CHANGING

April 17, 2015

Bedside Ultrasonography by Pediatric Emergency Medicine Physicians

Katherine Bakes, MD reviewing American Academy of Pediatrics. Pediatrics 2015 Apr. Marin JR et al. Pediatrics 2015 Apr.

In a joint policy statement and technical report, pediatric and emergency medicine leaders endorse its use and provide a framework for developing a program.

While the American College of Emergency Physicians sanctioned the use of point-of-care ultrasonography by emergency medicine physicians in 1990, pediatric emergency medicine physicians have been slower to adopt this diagnostic modality. As of 2011, 12% of pediatric emergency medicine fellowship programs still did not offer point-of-care ultrasound training.

Now, in a joint policy statement, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Society for Academic Emergency Medicine, and American College of Emergency Physicians endorse the use of point-of-care ultrasound by pediatric emergency physicians and support the American Board of Pediatrics' requirement that pediatric emergency medicine fellowship programs provide point-of-care ultrasound training. Recognizing the need to educate fellows as well as board-certified pediatric emergency physicians, an accompanying technical report provides a framework for developing a point-of-care ultrasound program. Key elements include a structured curriculum, hands-on training, image review, competency testing, skill maintenance, quality assurance, process improvement, documentation and archiving, and hospital credentialing.

COMMENT

This long-overdue policy statement moves our practice forward and highlights the advantage of partnering across emergency medicine domains. Ultrasound facilitates rapid assessment of the critically ill and injured child while avoiding unnecessary ionizing radiation, making it an ideal imaging modality for pediatric patients and a necessary skill for all emergency physicians.

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