

Characteristics and Medical Expenditures of Children Aged 0-19 Hospitalized for Injuries in Taiwan, 2006-2008

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Abstract

Purposes: This study examined the characteristics of injured children aged 0-19 in Taiwan and factors associated with hospitalization medical expenditures. **Methods:** This research used SPSS 18.0 software to study “inpatient expenditures by admissions (DD)”, “registry for contracted medical facilities (HOSB)” and “catastrophic illness (HV)” data from the National Health Insurance Research Database between 2006 and 2008. We defined injury cases as patients identified by ICD-9-CM N Code “800-999”. **Results:** A total of 142,287 injury cases among children aged 0-19 were registered during the 3-year 2006-2008 period. Medical expenditures associated with this group totaled NT5.33 billion. Those in the 15-19 age bracket accounted for the highest proportion of admissions (40.0%); A total of 3% of the group held a catastrophic illness card; Regional hospitals received the highest percentage of admissions (45.8%); Nearly half (47.1%) of patients were from urban areas; Fractures represented the largest (34.3%) injury category; Nearly half (46.2%) of injuries were associated with traffic accidents; and most patients (64.7%) were single injury cases. Factors associated with injury-related hospital medical expenditures included gender, age, catastrophic illness card, hospital type, urban demographic, injury type, injury cause and multiple injury status. **Conclusions:** The most common types and causes of injury included fractures and traffic accidents. Drowning was associated with the highest medical expenditure burden. To reduce overall expenditures, authorities should develop prevention strategies to reduce fractures caused by traffic injuries and strategies to reduce drowning-related medical expenditures.

Key words: Injury, child, National Health Insurance database, medical expenditure.

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