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Subject: Common Data Elements for Traumatic Brain Injury

Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of the International Neurotrauma Society representing over 750 clinicians and neuroscientists from around the world dedicated to finding therapeutic treatments for patients suffering from brain and spinal cord injury, we would like to thank you for your ongoing efforts to develop a set of Common Data Elements for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Because your four agencies provide a majority of funding for government-supported TBI research, we commend you for the foresight to work together on this crucial project.

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As you are aware, TBI results in a broad spectrum of symptoms and disabilities that have a devastating impact on the patient and his or her family. The human brain is the most complicated organ of the human body, and trauma is the most complex form of insult. Therefore, it is not surprising that investigators struggle daily with trying to design experiments and/or clinical trials identifying the appropriate data to be collected. Your project will minimize the investigator's need to design new case report forms and collection instruments every time a new TBI trial is funded. The common set of data collection instruments for prehospital, emergency department, imaging, surgical, intensive care unit, acute care hospital, rehabilitation, and long-term outcome data points that are currently being constructed will eliminate the existing duplication process that occurs each time a new study is launched.

Another advantage of this approach is that the data from these standardized collection instruments could then be deposited into a large database that grows every time a new study is added. This will allow for important retrospective analyses that have not been available since the Trauma Coma Data Bank during the 1980s. Consequently, such a data set will be a real treasure for all who are interested in finding a cure for TBI.

Again, we would like to thank you for your efforts and offer our full support for this project.

Sincerely,



David A. Hovda, Ph.D.
President
International Neurotrauma Society

Cc: Dr. Andrew Maas, Past President, INTS
Dr. Ji-yao Jiang, Vice President, INTS
Dr. Edward Hall, Secretary, INTS
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