**The Evolving Role of Child Maltreatment Risk in the Contexts of**

**Service Triage, Delivery, and Research**

Overview of Proposed Workshop

This proposed research-based workshop closely examines a myriad of conceptual issues surrounding the construct of *child maltreatment risk* and its implications on treatment and surveillance of maltreatment. The talk is divided into three core segments that range in coverage from frontline triage decisions informed by assessments of individual and family risk, methods for client-centered tailoring of treatments to directly address prioritized risk, and new frontiers of measurement for assessing and responding to client risks. Discussion will be heavily concentrated on advanced methods for research design, measurement, and analysis of treatment-focused maltreatment trials. Data will also be presented from three ongoing maltreatment prevention studies that begin to address significant gaps in the current compendium of maltreatment risk knowledge.

**Learning Objectives**

1. Review risk classification as a triage tool rather than an enrollment strategy.
2. Introduce risk-informed adaptive treatment strategies for primary and secondary care settings.
3. Propose new measurement frontier for assessment of maltreatment risk.

The Role of Risk Assessment in Triage of Services

Level of risk is often based on counselor or family’s perceptions of need with minimal grounding in empirical evidence, and prevention services are then prescribed based on simple discrete determinations of risk/no risk. This approach to service choice has been shown to have little to no benefit in alleviating future child welfare involvement, especially among populations at the highest levels of risk (Chaffin et al., 2001). We present predictive validity results on a new risk assessment tool for maltreatment preventive services, developed from secondary data analysis of three existing maltreatment databases. We review the design of a new, innovative trial evaluating this assessment tool along with the seminal predictive validity evidence.

Maltreatment services continue to use one-size-fits-all delivery system; yet, a multidimensional conception of maltreatment risk is widely acknowledged and accepted among providers. Building on momentum of individualized guidelines for care in medicine (e.g., Eddy et al., 2011), this segment of the workshop focuses on the development of adaptive treatments for primary prevention and family preservation care. We first review existing evidence, including our own recent findings, regarding predictive validity of known risk factors of future maltreatment subtypes. We also present data from a newly designed trial testing an adaptive treatment approach to prevention tailoring model implementation to individual risk profiles.

Finally, we focus on the breadth of coverage of existing risk assessment batteries. We highlight areas of measurement we believe have not yet been exhaustively explored and propose a series of new, more direct methods for assessing maltreatment risk which borrows heavily from recent theoretical developments that have been rapidly evolving out of risk perception, risk attitude, and risk behavior work in the decision sciences (Gerard et al., 2008). Psychometric data on these new proposed measures of risk from a large, ongoing survey of at-risk populations are also presented.

**References:**

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