



Contacts:

Megan McGrath, Datalys Center
317-238-7040
mmcgrath@datalyscenter.com

Kathryn Ayres, NATA
972-532-8838
Kathryna@nata.org

Unique research to study injuries, treatment and outcomes of young athletes

National Athletic Trainers' Association selects Datalys Center to conduct three-year study on high school student athletes

DALLAS AND INDIANAPOLIS, September 8, 2010 – An estimated 7.2 million secondary school students in the U.S. participate in organized sports that result in approximately 2 million injuries each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The National Athletic Trainers' Association Education & Research Foundation and Datalys Center for Sports Injury Research and Prevention have teamed up to conduct the first study integrating injury surveillance, treatment and patient outcomes using data gathered by athletic trainers in public high schools. Datalys Center, an Indianapolis-based non-profit organization, received a grant from the NATA Foundation for this study, named NATA NATION™ (National Athletic Treatment Injury and Outcomes Network). The research will be conducted over the next three years using a national population sample.

"Injuries among our high school athletes present unique challenges for athletic trainers and other health care professionals," said NATA Foundation President Mark Hoffman, PhD, ATC. "Unlike professional or collegiate athletes, many in this age group are still growing, and often they are playing multiple sports. This information will allow us to evaluate the impact of athletic training services on this unique population while providing an important resource to physicians, coaches, administrators and parents. We hope this will lead to an increased level of care for our student athletes."

The partnership between NATA and Datalys Center on the secondary school research will be similar to the innovative approach to injury surveillance that Datalys uses for the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

"We've been working with the NCAA for the last two years on understanding sports related injuries in collegiate populations," said Troy Hege, president of the Datalys Center. "We are thrilled to have the opportunity to work with the NATA Foundation and leverage our expertise and experience in injury surveillance to better understand injuries and outcomes in a secondary school population. This research is important because of the age of the athletes, the sheer size of the population, and the growing interest in this population by the public health and clinical care communities."

The National Athletic Trainers' Association, the profession's membership organization, is partially underwriting the research. NATA hopes that NATA NATION™ will demonstrate the importance of the continuum of care provided by athletic trainers in secondary schools. According to NATA, athletic trainers frequently are the only health care professionals serving these students; additionally, the injury prevention and wellness services athletic trainers provide are important to allowing students to more fully participate in sports and physical activity.

Further contributions for this project have been received from American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine, National Basketball Athletic Trainers Association and various individuals.

National Athletic Trainers' Association Research & Education Foundation (NATA Foundation) – Athletic trainers are health care professionals who specialize in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of injuries and illnesses. The NATA Foundation is the only 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the profession of athletic training through research and education. Established in 1991, the NATA Foundation has awarded more than \$2 million in undergraduate and graduate scholarships and \$2.9 million in research grants. For more information, visit www.natafoundation.org

Datalys Center for Sports Injury Research

The Datalys Center is a national 501(c)3 non-profit organization that conducts and facilitates research and surveillance programs. Datalys' programs aim to support the sports injury information needs of organizations focused on improving the health and safety of the growing number of Americans who are physically active. Through Datalys' collection and application of injury and treatment information, policies and education can be developed in order to prevent and treat sports injuries more effectively. For more information, visit www.datalyscenter.org

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