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Nordic research network for children and adolescents – GPs and prevention, diagnosis, effective treatments, next of kin and family health teams

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Background & Aim: There is surprisingly little published work on child and adolescent health in primary care. In this network, we have common objectives to focus on the GPs' maintenance of child and adolescent health. Observation of 21 preventive health examinations in Danish family practice, and interviewing the parents and the GPs immediately after the consultation, will be presented. Along with some colleagues in Scotland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark we applied for funding a survey of child health screening practice in Europe in order to develop a trial of screening for behaviour problems linked with a psychosocial intervention. Some members of the group have validated instruments to diagnose mental disorders and the effect of the training of general practitioners in CBT. Children facing parental cancer are found to be at risk for developing short and long term consequences. Many ill parents have frequent encounters with their GP, thus the GP may be in a good position to provide support. The aim of this symposium is to strengthen the scope and quality of research for children and adolescents.

Method: Several planned and conducted studies are presented. The studies use quantitative and qualitative measures and mixed-methods. Psychometric methods are used in studies that validate diagnostic tools.

Results: The GP is a key figure for children, youth and their families. Young people deserve thorough assessment for underlying causes of their health problems. Parents with cancer want recognition as responsible parents but evaluating children's health and well-being in this situation is complicated and parents may find it difficult to know whether their children are in need of support. A tool for supporting parents and children in these families is presented.

Conclusions: There is insufficient evidence about how GPs should provide better services for children, youth and their families.