**TITLE:**  Adverse Childhood Experiences: A Qualitative Analysis of Practice Team and Caregiver Focus Groups

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**RESEARCH PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Background:**  Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs; e.g., child maltreatment, caregiver mental illness, caregiver incarceration) are associated with a myriad of health conditions and risk behaviors in children and adults. Identifying adverse events in primary care is both a missed opportunity for prevention and an opportunity for intervention. In a recent study by our team, we determined that although pediatricians recommend screening and intervening when ACEs are present, they are hesitant and/or poorly equipped to do so. To better understand barriers and facilitators to screening for ACEs in pediatric practice, we will conduct focus groups with primary care pediatricians and their practice teams.

It is also important to consider the particular concerns, circumstances, and preferences of the target patient group. To this end, a second component will be to conduct focus groups with a diverse group of caregivers to identify barriers and facilitators to responding to ACE screening tools. Data from these focus groups will strongly inform development and implementation of an ACE screening and management tool for use in primary pediatric practice.

**Hypothesis:**  Through a better understanding of barriers to and facilitators of screening for ACEs, pediatricians can more appropriately, systematically, and proactively screen for and mitigate health consequences of ACEs.

**Role of medical student:**  The primary role of the medical student(s) will be to assist in the analysis of qualitative data from focus groups of providers and caregivers (planned spring, 2014). Expected outcomes include a poster presentation at UF and potentially submission to national meeting and/or writing a manuscript.

In addition, the student(s) will gain joint mentorship from faculty with the Institute for Child Health Policy, the Department of Health Outcomes and Policy, and the Department of Pediatrics. Through this mentorship, the student(s) will have the opportunity to engage in clinic and dependency court observations.

**Funding and relevant publications:**  Current internal efforts by Pediatrics and Health Outcomes and Policy allow for this integrated research.


