

The most common cause of severe adrenal insufficiency in children, now known as Addison's disease, is autoimmune. In this condition the body's own immune system attacks the adrenal glands and destroys them. People suffering from Addison's disease are also at increased risk of other organ-specific autoimmune diseases, e.g. of the thyroid gland. If untreated the condition is life threatening and unfortunately it is not always spotted early enough. Though it is now more than 150 years since first described, the disease remains under diagnosed, leading to unnecessary morbidity and mortality. Autoimmune Addison's disease in children is an uncommon but potentially lethal condition.

We intend to undertake a 13 month study to evaluate a rare condition with important clinical relevance. The current incidence of autoimmune Addison's disease in UK (under 16 yrs) will be identified. Clinical presentation and diagnostic strategies will be analysed and reported in the scientific literature. Variations in emergency management will be highlighted (for instance provision of emergency injectable treatment, steroid card and ambulance cover).

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the morbidity and mortality in children with this condition.

United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland

July 2011 - July 2012 (13 months)

We intend to undertake a 13 month study to identify the following aspects of autoimmune Addison's disease in the paediatric population in the UK

- How common is Addison's disease in children in the UK and Ireland under the age of 16 years? This would help us define the incidence of this condition in the UK and Ireland
- What are the clinical patterns of presentation, particularly the interval between the onset of symptoms and diagnosis and associated endocrine and non-endocrine conditions?

Answering these two questions would help us understand the clinical burden of this disease in UK, and the level of awareness of this condition amongst health professionals.

- What are the variations in the emergency management of children with autoimmune

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