NTDB™ data points

How national is the trauma data bank?

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The second annual report of the National Trauma Data Bank™ (NTDB) was released this past fall. Data have been submitted from 130 trauma centers across the U.S. and include 430,577 records. This compilation represents the largest aggregation of trauma registry data that has ever been assembled.

Not since 1990, when Champion and others published *The Major Trauma Outcome Study: Establishing National Norms for Trauma Care* (MTOS), have we had the opportunity to take a critical look at the patterns of injury and delivery of trauma care. The MTOS was conducted under the auspices of the American College of Surgeons from 1982 to 1989. Investigators at 140 hospitals utilized a standard collection form for data submission. This project ultimately led to the development of a national trauma registry and subsequently this national trauma data repository. Unlike the MTOS, which accumulated 80,000 cases over a period of eight years, the NTDB has eclipsed that rate fivefold and in a shorter time frame. The current record accrual rate is approaching 200,000 cases per year. There is a broad geographic representation from trauma centers located in 22 states across the country, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia (see figure). These 130 trauma centers submitting data represent roughly 25 percent of all Level I and Level II trauma centers nationwide.

States from which one or more hospitals have submitted to the NTDB are shown in dark grey. States whose data is in the process of being added to the NTDB are shown in light grey.

The mission of the American College of Surgeons' Committee on Trauma is "to improve the care of the injured through systematic efforts in prevention, care and rehabilitation." Publishing the NTDB *Annual Report 2002* is one way in which the College is able to carry out this mission. By informing the medical community, the public, and decision makers regarding the current state of trauma care we can identify the strengths of our current trauma care delivery system. Of equal importance is to identify areas for improvement as we look toward the future. Trauma care has achieved national attention in light of the past year's events. Now more than ever, we need to become and stay informed about the delivery of care to the injured person.

Throughout the year we will be highlighting these data through "NTDB data points," which will be found regularly in the *Bulletin*.

For a complete copy of the NTDB *Annual Report 2002*, visit us on the ACS Web site at *http://www.facs.org/dept/trauma/ntdbannualreport2002.pdf*. If you are interested in submitting your trauma center's data, contact Melanie Neal, NTDB Manager, at mneal@facs.org.