**ISA ISPID  
  
Abstract Submission  
  
Nº: 242**

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| Topics: **SIDS/SUID** |
| Type: **Oral** |
| **International research priorities in SUDI: findings of the GAPS project** |
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| **Introduction** Great strides have been made in sudden infant death research, leading to ground-breaking interventions such as the Back to Sleep campaigns that saved many infant lives. Yet rates have stagnated in recent years and a cause(s) has yet to be found. Action must be taken to identify research gaps and ensure future funding is allocated to projects that have the most potential to reduce the number of sudden unexpected deaths in infancy (SUDI) around the world. To do this we need to unite all experts in SUDI: those with personal experience of bereavement as well as those with professional expertise, and establish consensus on where future research efforts should be focused. The main objectives were to: 1) Identify which areas of research should be prioritised in the next 10 years in order to reduce the rate of SUDI; 2) Gather opinions and establish consensus on research priorities from a wide range of interested parties including researchers, clinicians, affiliated professionals and bereaved families from around the world; 3) Use the consensus generated to create a publication and inform future research funding.  **Material and Methods** GAPS used a form of normative group process developed by the James Lind Alliance, a non-for-profit organisation based in the UK. An open-ended online survey asked an international group of professionals and bereaved family members to first generate suggestions on how to reduce SUDI. These suggestions were refined into statements and verified by literature review. A second survey was circulated much more widely which asked participants to rate the importance of the refined statements on a Likert scale. The 30 top-rated statements were taken forward to a series of workshops in the US, UK and Australia where mixed groups of professional and bereaved participants prioritised the suggestions to finally reach a mutually-agreed top 10.  **Results** 750 participants took part from 26 countries around the world, of which 45% were healthcare professionals/researchers and 34% were bereaved family members. Each workshop reached consensus on a final top 10 of priorities, and between the workshops there was consensus on six of the 10 priorities.  The key themes that emerged were: actively seek to understand all the mechanisms and risk factors underlying SUDI and find ways to enable pathologists to accurately determine the cause of death; systematically collect and share data to accurately classify SUDI cases; and actively seek to understand the significance of social and cultural factors in SUDI cases and use all available evidence to develop new, more effective safe sleep campaigns.  **Conclusions** The international SUDI community is united on a number of shared research priorities for reducing sudden infant death. This consensus must be leveraged to focus future funding and research efforts. |
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