

Mental Health in the Emergency Department

**Collaboration for Leadership in
Applied Health Research and Care
North Thames**

Background

How can we help EDs better prepare for the arrival of patients with acute mental health problems?

- Aim: To describe the population of patients who attend EDs in England, including patient sociodemographic characteristics
- HES A&E dataset: adult attendances at English EDs, Apr 2013- Mar 2014
- Mental health attendances – first diagnosis code:
 - HES: ‘psychiatric conditions’ or ‘poisoning (including overdose)’
 - ICD-10: Ch V (mental and behav disorders) or Ch X60-69 (intentional SH by poisoning)
- **>260,000** attendances had a MH diagnosis; **~6 million** had another Dx
- **4.2%** of all attendees with a recorded Dx had a mental health Dx

Sociodemographic characteristics

Age

- 18-24: 22.7% MH attendances vs 15.6% all attendances
- 25-49: 53.6% MH attendances vs 40.7% all attendances
- 50-74: 19.5% MH attendances vs 27.4% all attendances
- 75+: 4.2% MH attendances vs 16.4% all attendances

Ethnic group (major categories)

- White British: 73.2% MH attendances vs 72.1% all attendances
- Asian: 3.2% MH attendances vs 4.8% all attendances
- Black: 2.8% MH attendances vs 3.0% all attendances

Sociodemographic characteristics

Socioeconomic circumstances

- Clear socioeconomic gradient:
 - MH attendances: 36.5% from most deprived quintile – 8.4% from the least
 - All attendances: 28.5% from most deprived quintile– 14.1% from the least
- Missing IMD information
 - 4.4% of MH attendances vs 0.9% all attendances
 - 20.8% of attendees missing IMD info had a MH diagnosis

Sex

- Female: 48.2% MH attendances vs 50.7% all attendances

GP registration

- Registered: 94.3% MH attendances vs 96.7% all attendances

Attendance characteristics

Day of arrival

- Peak day(s) of attendance:
 - MH attendances: Saturday (15.5%) and Sunday (15.8%)
 - All attendances: Monday (16.1%)

Time of arrival

- 9am to 5pm: 32.0% MH attendances vs 50.2% all attendances
- 5pm to Midnight: 38.9% MH attendances vs 31.9% all attendances
- Midnight to 9am: 29.1% MH attendances vs 17.8% all attendances

Attendance characteristics

Mode of arrival

- Ambulance: 61.9% of MH attendances vs 32.9% of all attendances
- 7.6% of ambulance presentations are mental health-related
- 24.6% of police presentations are mental health-related

Destination on departure (major categories)

- Admit: 32.5% MH attendances vs 26.8% all attendances
- Transfer to other hospital: 4.0% MH attendances vs 1.1% all attendances
- Discharge – GP F/U: 20.0% MH attendances vs 18.1% all attendances
- Discharge – no F/U: 36.3% MH attendances vs 31.4% all attendances
- Left/ refused Rx: 5.7% MH attendances vs 1.1% all attendances

Summary

- First national study of mental health-related ED attendances
- Previous studies single site and of poor quality

Mental health attendances:

- 4.2% of all ED attendances
- Younger (<50), White British, from the most deprived areas

- 2/3 arrive out of hours (5pm-9am)
- Peak of attendances on a Saturday and Sunday
- Importance of the emergency services

- 1/3 will need admission
- 50% discharged home from the ED (+/- GP follow up)

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