

P02-172 - HOW WELL PREPARED IS A PSYCHIATRIC WARD FOR DEALING WITH A MEDICAL EMERGENCY?

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Objectives: Geographical separation of psychiatric units from general hospitals may significantly delay provision of optimal treatment for patients in a medical emergency. Following a 'near miss' event, we explored how well equipped our unit is for managing such cases. Our objectives were: To explore how confident staff are in dealing with medical emergencies

1. To measure staff confidence levels in emergency care procedures
2. To evaluate staff orientation by exploring how well staff could locate key equipment

Methods: Distribution of a questionnaire survey asking respondents to rate their confidence in various emergency skills, for example maintaining an airway. Staff were also asked to rate their confidence in being able to locate emergency equipment and medication when necessary. In addition, suggestions for improvement in provision of any aspect of emergency care were sought.

Following this, data collation was performed by various members of the multi-disciplinary team with scrutiny of current practice. Areas of change include layout of emergency trolley, revision of staff induction to emergency equipment and provision of easily accessible protocols for common medical emergencies. Following these changes, the questionnaire will be re-distributed and the datasets compared.

Results: We anticipate that the survey will be completed by February 2010

Conclusions: This investigation will provide very useful, practical data on how well prepared for an emergency a typical psychiatric ward and staff are for providing immediate emergency care. This will have implications for induction and staff training policy, to ensure patient safety and provision of appropriate medical treatment.