A PSYCHIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONER L E D URGENT CARE CENTER: DECREASING EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS

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Abstract

Statement of the Problem: The lack of access to psychiatric services in health care has been a constant challenge for decades, resulting in significant delays to treatment with consequences in reduced quality of care, low patient satisfaction, poor patient outcomes, reduction in the workforce and higher costs (National Council for Behavioral Health, 2017). According to a March, 2017 report from the National Council of Behavioral Health (NCBH), a national shortage of psychiatrists is about to spiral out of control, with 77% of U.S. counties reporting a severe psychiatrist shortage. Emergency departments have seen an increase of psychiatric patients in the last couple of years. This trend is related to the lack of access to mental health providers. Urgent care is defined as health care provided for the treatment of acute illness or injury that is not life threatening (Urgent Care Association of America [UCAOA], 2011). Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: In December 2017, a Psychiatric NP led urgent care office was implemented. After a year of collecting data from a retrospective chart review, 49 patients were seen from December 2017- December 2018 for urgent mental health issues. Findings & Conclusion & Significance: After a year of collecting data from a retrospective chart review, 49 patients were seen from December 2017- December 2018 for urgent mental health issues. Two patients required police intervention to be taken to hospital for inpatient admission due to an active suicidal plan. As part of a solution in alleviating overcrowded EDs for patients with life threatening needs, urgent care centers serve as a viable alternative (UCAOA,2011). The Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner in an urgent care setting is educationally prepared to provide comprehensive psychiatric management to patients and most importantly effective in decreasing Emergency Room visits and in addition increase patient satisfaction and patient safety. Recommendations are made for adding urgent care centers to address psychiatric issues.

Recent Publications

1. Bishop T. (2016). Population of US practicing psychiatrists declined which may help explain poor access to mental health care. Health Affairs. 35(7): 365: 519-530.
2. Ely, L. T. (2015). Nurse-managed clinics: Barriers and benefits toward financial sustainability when integrating primary care and mental health. Nursing Economics, 33, 193-202.
3. National Projections of Supply and Demand for Behavioral Health Practitioners: 2013-2025. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources andServices Administration Bureau of Health Workforce National.
4. Stanik-Hutt, J., Newhouse, R. P., White, K. M., Johantgen, M.,Bass, E. B., Zangaro, G., Weiner, J. P. (2013). The quality and effectiveness of care provided by nurse practitioners. Journal for Nurse Practitioners, 9, 492-500.
5. Zaynah, A., Meltzer, A, Lazar, D., & Pines, D. (2014). Psychiatric Boarding in U.S. EDS: A Multifactorial Problem that Requires Multidisciplinary Solutions. Policy Brief, Urgent Matters. 1(2), 1-5.



Biography

Pasqua Spinelli received her PhD from Capella University and her undergraduate Nursing degrees from Adelphi University, Garden City , New York. She currently is the Family Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner in an outpatient setting on Long Island, New York. She also is a Legal Nurse Consultant and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner.

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Notes/Comments: