

## **Initial Assessment of Psychosis in the Emergency Department**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Patients presenting with psychosis to general hospital emergency departments can present challenges to assessment but it is essential to exclude any organic aetiology.

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

This study measures compliance with recommendations from the BMJ Best Medical Practise guidelines (1). They recommend that organic causes be investigated as follows:

- All patients undergo full neurological assessment
- All patients undergo basic blood tests
- All patients undergo urine dip and urine drug screening

### **METHODS**

Retrospective study of 31 inpatients seen in A&E department at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital January 2013 – April 2014.

- Clinical case notes were reviewed to identify those with documented psychotic symptoms
- 124 patients identified
- 27 excluded - notes unavailable
- 29 excluded as there was no A&E attendance
- 37 patients excluded as no documented psychotic symptoms.

This left 31 patients to be included

### **RESULTS**

- No patients underwent all investigations recommended
- 71% of patients had a recorded GCS/AVPU score.
- 90% of patients underwent at least one blood test investigation
- 12% of patients underwent urine dip and 0% urine drug screening

### **CONCLUSIONS**

- The standard of practice was unacceptable
- All staff should be reminded of the importance of clear documentation in patient notes including any refusal/un-cooperation of patients to examination or treatment
- Local guidelines/ educational sessions should be developed to review assessment of this patient group
- Clinical staff should be reminded of recommended investigations for patients presenting with altered mental state

### **REFERENCES**

- 1) <http://bestpractice.bmj.com/best-practice/monograph/1066/diagnosis/step-by-step.html>