

P01-559

VANCOUVER'S INNER-CITY YOUTH: NEW APPROACHES FOR A CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC

M. Patel, S. Mathias, T. Brown

Psychiatry, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Introduction: Inner-city youth suffer a high burden of mental illness and seek health care on an episodic basis (McCreary, 2001).

These youth tend to receive limited support services due to a lack of continuity of care as they move from child to adult services. Other barriers include homelessness and substance use.

The Vancouver Inner City Youth Mental Health Program (ICYMHP) is a psychiatry led initiative to provide psychiatric services and further collaboration between inner-city youth agencies providing care to at risk youth.

Aims: To introduce and review a collaborative model of care between psychiatric services and community based organizations.

To review the demographics, presentations and outcomes of youth assessed through the ICYMHP.

Methods: A chart review of all clients assessed through the program from its inception (November 2007) to May 2009 (18 months).

Results: Results from clients seen between November 2007 and June 2008 indicate an incidence of psychosis of 40% in men and 21% in women. Mood disorders were the primary diagnosis in 18% of men and 29% of women. Active substance misuse is high (71% of men, cannabis as drug of choice; 54% of women, methamphetamine as drug of choice). Length of stay at Covenant House nearly tripled for those under the care of the ICYMH versus the general shelter population, a positive outcome (21 days versus 9).

Conclusions: Inner-city homeless youth suffer from a high burden of mental illness. A collaborative model of care exists to improve health care quality and delivery to this population.