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Introduction

The forensic history is a vital part of the assessment in patients referred to forensic services. It influences decisions made about risk and the link between illness and offending behaviour. Doctors should view the police national computer, (PNC) record in all assessments of referrals.

Objectives

To establish whether PNC records are available to doctors conducting forensic psychiatric assessments of new referrals at a medium secure unit (MSU).

Aims

Establish what proportion of patients referred to a MSU in London had a PNC record present at the time the assessment report was presented to the admissions panel.

Methods

The admissions panel of a MSU in London has kept data on all assessments carried out since 2011. All of this data was reviewed to see what proportion of patients had a PNC record present at the time the assessment report was presented to the admissions panel.

Results

In total there were 186 patients. 21 of these were women. 165 of these were men. 59% of the assessments had a PNC record present. In 19% of assessments a PNC was not requested. In 18% it was requested but not available. In 4% it was deemed not necessary.

Conclusions

A PNC record was not available in 41% of forensic assessments carried out by a large forensic service in London. In 19% of these cases a PNC had not been requested. Suggested recommendations are that the PNC is requested at the time that the referral is received by the trust.