

P01-266 - TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF AN ALCOHOL NURSE SPECIALIST ON ALCOHOL RELATED REFERRALS TO AN IRISH LIAISON PSYCHIATRY SERVICE

M. Clancy, D. Cotter, S. MacHale

Department of Psychiatry, Beaumont Hospital, Dublin, Ireland

Introduction: Referrals for advice regarding treatment of alcohol related disorders form a large component of the liaison psychiatry workload. This study aims to demonstrate whether the addition of an alcohol liaison nurse specialist would decrease the number of patients needed to be seen by psychiatrists.

Methods: In-patient ward referrals were examined over 2 nine month periods. The first nine month period examined all alcohol related referrals when there was no liaison alcohol nurse. In the second period, the nurse was present. Data was analysed using SPSSv15.

Results: A total of 243 referrals were examined over the 18 month period. The number of alcohol related referrals to psychiatrists dropped from 145 to 97 after the arrival of the alcohol nurse. This represented a 33% drop in the number of referrals. The alcohol nurse saw a total of 175 referrals. The psychiatrists saw a higher percentage of delirium tremens, 13.3% increased to 27.7%, p value .009. Also of note, the percentage of female referrals increased from 28.9% of all referrals to 44.3% of all referrals after the arrival of the alcohol nurse $p=.027$.

Conclusion: The addition of an alcohol nurse specialist led to a substantial drop in the number of alcohol related referrals to psychiatrists allowing additional time to be devoted to other aspects of the liaison psychiatry workload. More patients with delirium tremens and more women are being seen since the introduction of the alcohol nurse. Medical teams have a lower threshold of referral and more hazardous and harmful drinking was identified. Earlier intervention can help decrease longer term morbidity from alcohol.