

Patient transfers for psychiatric emergencies: Outcomes of the Nurse-led Consultant Psychiatry Liaison (NPCPL) service

Segal, J.,¹ Farrand, S.,¹ Walterfang, M.,¹ Hutchinson, A.,² Khaw, D.,² & Hooper, S.³

1. Consultant Liaison Stream, Epworth HealthCare
2. Centre for Quality and Patient Safety Research, Deakin-Epworth HealthCare Partnership
3. Rehabilitation and Mental Health, Epworth HealthCare

Introduction

- Acute care nurses regularly observe changes and deterioration in patients' mental health during hospital admissions for other medical conditions.
- Since March 2023, acute patients experiencing psychiatric emergencies can be transferred to the Epworth Clinic for appropriate inpatient mental health treatment. A Nurse Practitioner now reviews the suitability for transfer from hospital and completes the intake at the Epworth Clinic.
- Due to the limited research in this area, it is necessary to evaluate the uptake of nurse-led consultant mental health services.

Aims

To explore the uptake and outcomes of the Epworth HealthCare Nurse-led Consultant Psychiatry Liaison (NPCPL) since March 2023. Specifically, to describe:

1. The frequency of patients seen by the NPCPL service;
2. The prevalence of NPCPL patients transferred to the Epworth Clinic.

Methodology

- Data presented in this poster are from a retrospective review of patient information undertaken as part of a larger mixed methods study.
- We analysed patient records routinely collected as part of the NPCPL service.
- Due to wait times at the Epworth Clinic, sometimes the Nurse Practitioner checks on the patient from home for one-to-two days and asks them to re-present to the Emergency Department if they are unwell.

Results

Number of patients seen by the NPCPL service

The total throughput of the NPCPL is reported in Fig 1.

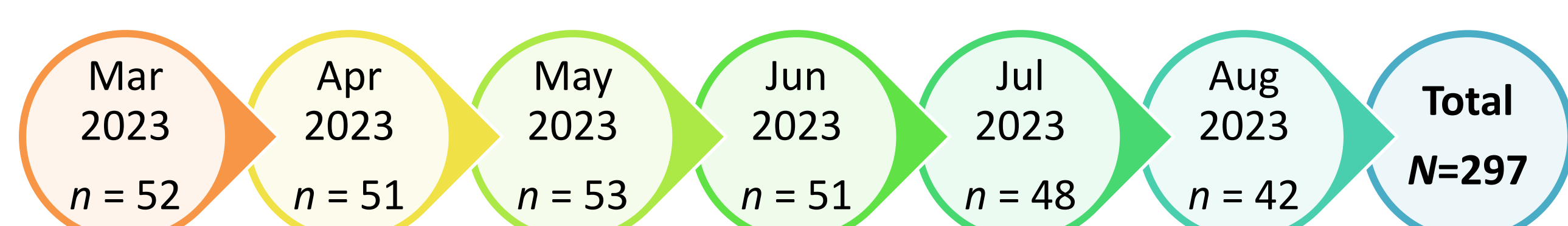


Fig 1. Total throughput of NPCPL service, March – August, 2023

Results (cont.)

Number of patient transfers

- During the past six months, 49 patients assessed by the NPCPL service were transferred to the Epworth Clinic (see Table 1). **This reflected 16.5% of the total NPCPL patient intake.**
- Most transfers were from patients admitted to hospital ($n = 38, 77.6\%$) rather than from Emergency Department admission ($n = 11, 22.4\%$).
- Psychiatric emergencies leading to patient transfer occurred for a variety of reasons and included both low- and high-prevalence mental health symptoms and disorders.

Table 1. Number of patients transferred to the Epworth Clinic

Month	Transferred from hospital admission (n)	Transferred from ED (n)	Transfer reasons
March 2023	3	0	Bipolar disorder, depression
April 2023	3	0	Bipolar disorder, avoiding public admission, depression
May 2023	8	2	Cardiac anxiety, suicidal ideation, depression, anxiety
June 2023	5	3	Non-compliance, depression, anxiety, unable to function
July 2023	6	3	Avoiding assessment orders, depression, anxiety, alcohol abuse
August 2023	13	3	Suicidal ideation, depression, anxiety, alcohol abuse, mania/psychosis.

Conclusions

The NPCPL service is providing important mental health support to Epworth patients who exhibit mental distress or psychiatric symptoms during their hospitalisation. In addition to undertaking mental health assessments and assisting with the management of challenging patient behaviours, the NPCPL service now assists Epworth patients by facilitating transfers to inpatient mental health care at the Epworth Clinic.