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## REVIEW OF COMMUNICATION WITH PRIMARY CARE AND APPROPRIATENESS OF PROVIDING ONGOING CARE TO PATIENTS IN A PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC

V.O.I. Agyapong<sup>1</sup>, A. Olorunfemi<sup>2</sup>, I. Nwachukwu<sup>2</sup>, A. Guerandel<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Psychiatry, St Patrick's University Hospital,* <sup>2</sup>*Department of Psychiatry, St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin, Ireland*

**Background:** Close collaboration and communication between specialist psychiatric services and primary care is essential in achieving an effective and efficient level of patient care.

**Aims:** To assess the rate of six monthly communication between specialised psychiatric service and primary care and to determine from patients records those that may be suitable for discharge back into primary care.

**Methods:** A retrospective chart review of all patients attending the relevant local psychiatric out-patient clinic was carried out to identify parameter relevant to the objectives of the study. This was followed by a multidisciplinary discussion to determine the appropriate ongoing care for the patients. The data was analysed with SPSS (version 17).

**Results:** A total of 105 patients' charts were reviewed in the audit. Overall, only 36% of patients' charts had a record of communication with primary care in the last six months. Only one variable, 'changes made to the patients medication in the last six months' was significantly associated with the likelihood that there had been communication with primary care with an odds ratio of 15 and a p-value of 0.00. It was recommended that 60% of the patients needed continuing care with psychiatric services, 35.2% could be discharged back into primary care and 4.8% could be managed jointly between psychiatric services and primary care.

**Conclusion:** A six monthly review has a potential to improve the level of communication between specialised psychiatric services and primary care. It also identifies patients who could be discharged back into primary care.