

POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON THE TRANSFER OF PATIENTS FROM THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, CORK UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL TO A MENTAL HEALTH CARE UNIT FOR ASSESSMENT / ADMISSION

See related document:
Mental Health Act, 2001

Title	Policy and procedure on the transfer of patients from the Emergency Department Cork University Hospital to a mental health care unit for assessment / admission
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Policy and procedure on the transfer of patients from the Emergency Department, Cork University Hospital to a mental health care unit for assessment / admission.

1 Purposes of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to introduce a standardised approach to the transfer of patients from Cork University Hospital (CUH) Emergency Department (ED) to a mental health care unit for assessment / admission

Target population

All adult patients requiring transfer from ED CUH to a mental health care unit for assessment / admission.

2 Definitions

None

3 Policy

The transfer of patients from ED to a mental health care unit is to be performed in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

4 Procedure

- The decision for transfer for admission / further assessment of a patient to a local mental health care unit is identified following mental health assessment of the patient by a Psychiatrist (liaison or on-call) in the ED department. This is documented in the medical notes
- Prior to transfer the patient is considered medically fit for discharge from ED by the ED Doctor and same documented in the patient's ED notes.
- The Psychiatrist (liaison or on-call) in the ED must call the relevant: Psychiatrist (or responsible person) in the receiving mental health care unit to discuss the patient status. This discussion must include the reasons for transfer along with needs, risks and whether the patient needs accompaniment by ED staff prior to transfer. This must be documented in the patient's medical notes.
- The Psychiatrist (liaison or on call) discusses with the CNM/Lead nurse in the ED about planning the transfer of the patient to the mental health care unit.
- The Psychiatrist (liaison or on call) in conjunction with the Clinical Nurse Manager (CNM) or the designated Lead Nurse in ED must decide who should escort the patient to the mental health care unit.
- In certain circumstances and if deemed appropriate by the Psychiatrist (liaison or on call) the patient's family may bring patients to the receiving unit.

- If transferring a female patient at least one member of the transport team must be female.
- The Clinical Nurse Manager (CNM) or the designated lead Nurse in ED informs the patient's family/carers of the transfer and requests them to follow the patient to the off-site mental health care unit.
- Transport arrangements for patients that require an 'assisted admission' under the Mental Health Act 2001 must be organised by contacting the receiving mental health unit. The receiving mental health unit will provide information about this.
- If it is likely that the patient will require psychiatric admission, and the receiving psychiatric unit have no beds available then the following applies:
 - The patient will remain in the ED for a maximum of 6 hours before re-assessment by the Psychiatrist (liaison or on-call).
 - Following re-assessment after 6 hours, the Psychiatrist (liaison or on-call) in CUH will call the Psychiatrist in the receiving mental health service site again. The purpose of this phone call will be to arrange a scheduled time of transfer to and reception by the receiving mental health service site for further psychiatric assessment and management. Patients with acute mental health needs must not remain in Emergency Departments any longer than is absolutely necessary.
 - Immediately prior to transfer the nursing and psychiatric staff in the receiving unit will again be alerted to their pending arrival by their counterparts in the ED.

Patient Transfer

- The following documentation must accompany the patient to the receiving unit:
 - A copy of the psychiatric assessment completed by liaison or on call psychiatrist.
 - A copy of both medical and nursing notes from the ED chart.
- The Clinical Nurse Manager or designated lead Nurse shall contact the Nurse in Charge of the Mental Health Care Unit to inform them of the impending transfer and give a comprehensive nursing assessment which includes the patient's needs, risks and the person who will be accompanying the patient.
- On arrival to the receiving unit the escorting nurse must give a verbal handover of the patient's condition. The documentation is given to the nurse in charge of the mental health care unit. This completes the transfer of the patient into the care of the psychiatric services.
- If a health care assistant escorts the patient to the mental health care facility the Clinical nurse Manager (CNM) or the designated Lead Nurse in ED must ring the receiving unit and give full verbal handover on the patient. The documentation is given to the nurse in charge of the mental health care unit by the care assistant. This completes the transfer of the patient into the care of the psychiatric services.

5 Responsibilities

5.1 Medical Staff in the ED

The medical staff must read and adhere to this policy and procedure. Medical staff are responsible for performing the initial assessment of the patient and to contact the Psychiatrist (liaison or on call) if appropriate.

5.2 The Psychiatrist (Liaison or on-call)

The Psychiatry team must read and adhere to this policy and procedure.

5.3 Clinical Nurse Manager

The clinical Nurse Manager maintains overall responsibility for ensuring nursing staff are aware of the policy and procedure and that it is implemented appropriately

5.4 The staff Nurse

Nurses working in ED must read and adhere to this policy and procedure.

5.5 Healthcare assistant

A healthcare assistant may escort a patient to an off site psychiatric unit once it has been deemed appropriate to do so by the psychiatry team in consultation with the ED CNM.

References

An Bord Altranais (2002), '*Recording Clinical Practice Guidance to Nurses and Midwives*' An Bord Altranais, Dublin Ireland

An Bord Altranais (2000), '*Scope of Nursing and Midwifery Practice Framework*' An Bord Altranais, Dublin Ireland

An Bord Altranais (2000), '*The Code of Professional Conduct for each Nurse and Midwife*' An Bord Altranais, Dublin Ireland

Mental Health Commission (2009). Code of Practice on Admission, Transfer and Discharge to and from an Approved Mental Health Care Centre. Mental Health Commission, Dublin Ireland.