

P-403 - CAPACITY ASSESSMENT REFERRALS TO A LIAISON PSYCHIATRY SERVICE IN A GENERAL HOSPITAL

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Introduction: Mental capacity is crucial to legal and ethical debates in a psychiatric context. Capacity assessment has become a distinct field of study as it is increasingly important in clinical practice. A patient's decision-making ability regarding their treatment options and management plans are vital in providing the patient with the best possible care.

Objective: To evaluate the capacity assessment referrals made to a liaison psychiatry service in a general hospital.

Aims: To examine the most common reasons for referral and the most common underlying diagnoses of the patient population for whom capacity evaluations were requested.

Methods: A retrospective analysis was undertaken on data collected from referrals to a liaison psychiatry service between May 2011 to July 2011 from medical and surgical teams at a general hospital in Singapore.

Results: A total of 594 patients were referred to the psychiatric service over 3 months, of which 59 (9.93%) were assessments for capacity. The patients ranged from 26 to 91 years of age. Of these patients, 17 (28.8%) were female, 42 (71.2%) were male. The mental capacity issues were mainly placement and treatment. Incapacity was mainly associated with delirium and cognitive impairment.

Conclusion: In acutely ill medical inpatients, lack of mental capacity is not uncommon. Specialist liaison teams have an essential role in facilitating management planning for these patients.