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Urgent Psychiatric Consults for Children Under 12 Years of Age: Reducing Pressure On Paediatric Emergency Rooms (ER).

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The last decade has seen a significant increase in presentations for mental health problems to paediatric ER, at least 5% of these visits are for mental health problems, most commonly suicide and aggression. Pediatricians identify their lack of training in treating this population. The **Aim** of this study was to a) examine the utilization of urgent consults by pediatricians for under 12-year olds b) study factors that make referrals urgent. c) Examine the impact on ED visits, referrals to psychiatric Ambulatory clinics. **Method** : This is a 6 month outcome study of children referred from the pediatric ED for urgent psychiatric consult at a university hospital. Data was gathered on demographic variables, reason for referral, presenting complaints, developmental variables and Family history, previous diagnosis, treatments, psychiatrists diagnosis and disposition, admission rates , ER visits and referral to other psychiatric clinics. Pediatricians provided feedback. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics. **Results**: Common reason for referral was aggression, grade 3 males predominated , the commonest diagnosis was ADHD/ADD followed by anxiety disorder. 67% had previous diagnosis and had a trial of medication, more than a quarter had LD, positive family history for ADHD/ADD or antisocial PD. There was 67% agreement between Pediatrician and psychiatrist on diagnosis. **Conclusion**: Amongst children that present to pediatric ER, there are a number of children who, by virtue of their neurodevelopmental vulnerabilities and consequent emotional/behavioral dyscontrol, require expedited psychiatric assessment and management. Timely access to this service reduces the need for ongoing hospital based services and presentation to ED.