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Topic: EPO05 - "the dreamers": changes in european psychiatry over the last 10 years

Assessment and Referral for Treatment of Patients at Risk for Suicide in the Emergency Department

L. Zun¹, L. Downey¹, T. Burke¹

¹Emergency Medicine, Mount Sinai Hospital, Chicago, USA

OBJECTIVE- The purpose of this study was to test the Suicide Severity Screen tool's ability to identify patients who present to the Emergency Department (ED) with non suicide related illness who might be at risk for suicide. The secondary purpose was to assess whether the patient followed up with the referral services after being discharged from the ED.

METHODS- A convenience sample of patients who presented to the ED with non suicide related illness were given the Suicide Severity Rating Screen, a validated tool to measure suicidality and given a referral of services. The patient was contacted two weeks afterwards to determine if they contacted any of these services.

RESULTS- A total of 311 patients were enrolled in the study. Twenty one percent of patients tested positive for at least one module: suicidal ideation, intent, or plan, and three percent tested positive for entire survey. Of the three that tested positive for the entire survey, all presented with psychiatric related illnesses. There was a significant relationship between the patient's disposition and whether they tested positive to the survey ($F=14.096$, $sig=.000$). Initial follow-up on use of referral services had a 50% success rate.

CONCLUSION- The Suicide Severity Screen identified patients who presented to the ED with non suicide related illnesses who were at risk for suicide. Almost half of those patients were found to be successful in accessing the referral service given to them.