



The Royal College of Emergency Medicine

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PRESS STATEMENT 28th January 2016 Launch of RCEM CLEAR Campaign

The Royal College of Emergency Medicine today launches its CLEAR Campaign; a five point plan to improve emergency mental health care.

Endorsed by the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the five point plan calls for the following five steps to be taken:

- C** Co-location of Liaison Mental Health Services
- L** Liaison Services 24/7
- E** Education of all ED Staff
- A** Adequate Access for Adolescents
- R** Right Person to the Right Place of Safety

President of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, Dr Clifford Mann said:

"Parity of care for patients with mental health problems presenting to A&E is the goal of this campaign. This campaign seeks to build on the momentum achieved by others to ensure that for those with acute problems, prompt expert help is provided. Working with our colleagues in mental health services and mental health charities a CLEAR response to patients in crisis must become a reality not an aspiration."

President of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, Professor Sir Simon Wessely said:

"Liaison psychiatry is core business for medicine. These specialist services comprise multidisciplinary teams, skilled to integrate mental and physical healthcare in people whose mental health problems arise as a result of, or impact on the management of, physical illness."

"Liaison psychiatry teams, where they exist, currently see hundreds of people every year, improving the quality of care they receive, maintaining their dignity, reducing adverse events within the hospital and finally getting people back home faster. It's vital because at any one time somewhere between 30 to 60% of mental disorders are diagnosed in those in hospital for a different problem."

"The aims of the CLEAR campaign, if realised, would transform liaison psychiatry for the better for all who need it and deliver it - in acute care, child and adolescent services and in critical situations, providing expertise around the clock."

As highlighted by the Prime Minister, David Cameron in his speech on 11th January 2016, it is essential that high quality support is there for those who need it, when they need it.

Excellence in Emergency Care

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The RCEM CLEAR Campaign is a big step in the right direction to providing this high quality support by improving emergency mental health care.

Chair of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine's Quality in Emergency Care Committee, Dr Adrian Boyle said:

"Patients with emergency mental health problems present unique challenges to Emergency Department staff. The patients present at all hours, require a lot of resource and support, suffer high rates of medical mishaps and poor experience.

This campaign is a set of simple principles that commissioners, managers and clinicians should implement to improve care."

The Royal College urges the Government, politicians and NHS leaders to work together to take the five steps needed to improve emergency mental health care. These steps are set out in greater detail below:

C Co-location of Liaison Mental Health Services

Combining services reduces the fragmentation of care that makes care confusing and difficult for both patients and staff. Shared targets encourage collaborative working.

L Liaison Services 24/7

Liaison psychiatry services are extremely effective at supporting patients, reducing admissions and risk. We have shown that patients present throughout the 24 hour period and services need to be tailored to this demand.

E Education of all ED Staff

Patient experience surveys consistently describe a poor patient experience in emergency departments. All clinical staff need to be trained how to respond compassionately and knowledgably to patients suffering a mental health crisis.

A Adequate Access for Adolescents

Assessment and admission, where required, should not be delayed for children and adolescents. These are a group who are often poorly served by crisis services. Children and adolescents should be responded to with the same urgency as children with a physical health problem. There should be sufficient capacity locally for the occasional adolescent who needs admission.

R Right Person to the Right Place of Safety

A police cell is a poor place for a person suffering a mental health crisis, however a busy and uncontrolled emergency department is also a poor place for some patients. An emergency department should not be the default position for all mental health crises. RCEM believes that the phrase 'Health Based Place of Safety' is an unhelpful term as it does not indicate whether patients are receiving the right care.

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About the Royal College of Emergency Medicine

The Royal College of Emergency Medicine is the single authoritative body for Emergency Medicine in the UK. Emergency Medicine is the medical specialty which provides doctors and consultants to A&E departments in the NHS in the UK and other healthcare systems across the world.

The Royal College works to ensure high quality care by setting and monitoring standards of care, and providing expert guidance and advice on policy to relevant bodies on matters relating to Emergency Medicine.

The Royal College has over 5,000 fellows and members, who are doctors and consultants in emergency departments working in the health services in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and across the world.

Contact

For further information, or to speak with a spokesperson for The Royal College of Emergency Medicine (between 9am and 5pm), please contact Gordon Miles at gordon.miles@rcem.ac.uk or on 020 7067 1260.

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