

Nurses' Perception about Factors Leading to Emergency Departments

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Description

Emergency department (ED) crowding has been described in health emergency as a concern for more than 20 years, and it has become a modern international health delivery problem. Emergency Departments (EDs) are the most challenging ward with respect to patient delay. Nurses who work in emergency departments in hospitals are often the first point of contact for patients after they enter the hospital setting. In this highly pressured role, nurses see patients suffering from a variety of different conditions, often in a critical or highly anxious state. Crowding in the ED is defined as having more patients than treatment rooms or more patients than staff should ideally care for, and overcrowding was defined as dangerously crowded, with an extreme volume of patients in ED treatment areas which forces the ED to operate beyond its capacity. Emergency Department (ED) crowding has been described in health emergency literature as a concern for more than 20 years, and it has become a modern international health delivery problem.

Overcrowding in emergency centres is a worldwide concern and represents an international crisis that may affect access to health care and the quality of services. Although the triggers of overcrowding in emergency centres are complex, multi-factorial and beyond the control of the emergency centre, the key reason is that emergency centres are normally too small and understaffed for the population they serve. Understanding the triggers and consequences of overcrowding in an emergency centre is essential to providing the effective leadership that is required to address them. Some authors associate overcrowding in emergency centres with poor outcomes of care and a greater likelihood of the absence of care, especially where there are more patients than resources. So, this study was done to assess nurses' perception about factors may lead to ED overcrowding at governmental hospitals in Gaza Strip. In addition, the lack of health care professionals is another important factor of

emergency department overcrowding. Overcrowding in the ED is a product of several factors including a shortage of ED nursing and physician staff. Some studies have shown that the shortage of physicians and nurses in the ED is ranked in the first top-five factors that cause ED overcrowding.

Conclusion

As EDs are an important component of any health care system, treating people who have a serious illness or injury that requires urgent attention, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. For all of that ED overcrowding situation is considered as a serious health problem both in Gaza Strip and around the World. This commentary aimed to assess nurses' perception about factors may lead to ED overcrowding at governmental hospitals in Gaza Strip. The study concluded that, from nurses' perspectives, governmental hospitals in the Gaza Strip suffer from ED overcrowding, because of the shortage of healthcare providers with an increased flow of non-urgent cases with many escorts with the same patient.

I recommend the following to reduce EDs overcrowding:

- Restricting and controlling the flow of patient escorts by the security members.
- Recruiting more healthcare providers to work in emergency departments.
- Continuous monitoring of resources and equipment especially emergency trolley, providing the missing resources and equipment continuously and developing specific checklist for ED resources and equipment.
- Monitoring the presence of the presence of nurses and physicians all the time in the EDs.
- Increasing awareness about the primary care role in dealing with non-urgent cases.