



The Royal College of Emergency Medicine

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal
7-9 Bream's Buildings
London
EC4A 1DT

Tel +44 (0)207 404 1999
Fax +44 (0)207 067 1267
www.rcem.ac.uk



PRESS STATEMENT 29 May 2015

Better dementia screening needed in A&E

A new [report](#) published today shows that elderly patients attending Emergency Departments are not regularly being screened for dementia or delirium.

The [Royal College of Emergency Medicine](#) (RCEM) audited a total of 13,748 records on patients aged over 75 years old from 170 Emergency Departments. The report is endorsed by the [British Geriatric Society](#).

RCEM Chair of Quality in Emergency Care Committee Dr Adrian Boyle said "Only 11% of patients are being screened for dementia/delirium. It is clear that as a specialty, we need to consider how best to build this into our processes."

RCEM President Dr Clifford Mann added "A key initiative is to routinely screen for dementia/delirium in the Emergency Department so that we can ensure appropriate care from the very start of the patient's journey. While reluctant to add more 'routine' data collection to over-burdened clinical staff, we can see there is a clear clinical benefit to this, and therefore support it."

RCEM has been at the forefront of developing standards to improve acute care for elderly patients brought to hospital.

Dr Mann said "We are delighted to follow up with an audit to demonstrate our commitment to better meeting the needs of older people in acute care."

There was one Fundamental ('must achieve') standard in the audit – that all patients over 75 must have an Early Warning Score assessment.

RCEM Chair of Standards & Audit Subcommittee Dr Jay Banerjee said "While there is room for improvement [in Early Warning Score assessment] with a national median of 82%, we were pleased by this performance as it was the first time this audit had been attempted."

The results of the audit also suggest that Emergency Departments do not yet have a consistent mechanism for communicating the results of assessment to carers or other medical professionals.

College audits are widely respected as a benchmark of quality care. The inspectorate bodies of each of the UK nations pay particular regard to both participation and performance in these audits.

-ENDS-

Excellence in Emergency Care

Incorporated by Royal Charter, 2008 VAT Reg. No: 173205823
Registered Charity number 1122689 Scottish Charity number SC044373

Further information

The full report can be downloaded from: www.rcem.ac.uk/Shop-Floor/Clinical%20Audit/Current%20Audits

Contact

For further information, or to speak with a spokesperson for The Royal College of Emergency Medicine, please contact Sam McIntyre at Sam.McIntyre@rcem.ac.uk or on 0207 067 1269.

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.