

Morbidity Pattern of Patients Presenting to the Emergency Treatment Unit over a One-Year Period at a Base Hospital in the Western Province in Sri Lanka

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Information on morbidity patterns of the community is imperative to the development of the healthcare system in any country. However, such information is lacking in developing countries like Sri Lanka. The purpose of this study was to assess the morbidity patterns of patients presenting to the Emergency Treatment Unit (ETU) in a Base hospital in the Western Province of Sri Lanka over one-year period. A retrospective, records-based study was carried out from 04th July 2015 to 04th July 2016. Information was retrieved from the hospital database which included reason for encounter and diagnosis which were coded according to the International Classification of Primary Care Second Edition (ICPC-2). Data were analysed using descriptive statistics. A total of 4745 patients were admitted to the ETU. 3327 (70.1%) were males making a female/male ratio of 1:2.3 with a mean age of 38.5 (SD– 20.9; median – 36) years. The commonest reasons for encounter were accidental trauma 14.5% (n=688), accidental falls 13.0% (n=617) and cut injuries 12.7% (n=603). The commonest problem definitions were lacerations 27.1% (1286), soft tissue injuries 14.9% (n=707) and acute asthma 5.2% (n=247). The commonest reasons for encounter were accidental trauma (16.5%) for men and accidental falls (11.0%) for females. 80.1% (n=3800) patients were discharged from the ETU after treatment and 8.5% (n=401) were transferred to tertiary care hospitals. Injuries are the leading cause of admission to ETU in all age groups and in both genders with a male predominance. Hence it is vital to allocate local health care resources and refine undergraduate medical education to address the local patterns of morbidity, to provide effective health care.

Keywords: Morbidity pattern, ETU admission, Base hospitals, Injuries