

NAPICU Poster Abstract:

Title: Street Triage: An analysis of the outcomes of 'Street Triage' assessments and their impact on Mental Health Act Section 136 Referrals.

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Introduction/ Background:

- S136 provides police officers in the UK with the authority to remove individuals who appear to be suffering from a mental disorder, from a public place to place of safety(1).
- Recently, there has been an increase in S136 detentions; (2), and a recent study has shown a large proportion of detained patients to be intoxicated at time of detention (3).
- In 2013, The British Home Secretary raised the proposal of 'Street Triage' - a system whereby mental-health support is made immediately available to police officers. This may be one way to divert some individuals away from overcrowded S136 hospital suites (4).
- This study focuses on the use of a 'Street Triage' team in the London Borough of Wandsworth.

Aims and Objectives:

- To analyse the outcomes of 'Street Triage' assessments in response to S136 call outs in Wandsworth
- To analyse the impact of 'Street Triage' assessments on the number of S136 referrals to the local Trust

Method:

- The 'Street Triage' involved psychiatric nurses either accompanying a police officer to a call out, or being available on the phone.
- The pilot was carried out over a 3-month period four days a week
- To analyse the impact of the triage on the number of S136 referrals, the total number of referrals in Wandsworth in the 3-month period of the 'Street Triage' was compared with the total number of referrals in Wandsworth in the 3-month period before the triage took place.

Results:

- Of the 35 people assessed by the Street Triage team, only 4 (11%) required a 'S136 Referral'
- Compared with the 45 people referred over the 'Street Triage' period, 56 were referred in the 3 month period prior to the use of the 'Street Triage'. This represents a 20% reduction in referrals over the trial period. For the Boroughs that did not form part of the 'Street Triage' trial, S136 referrals went down from 94 to 91, a 3% reduction.

Discussion and Conclusion

- The use of 'Street Triage' identified a significant number of cases (89%) that did not need referral onto a S136 assessment suite, and reduced referrals in the Borough where it was implemented by 20%. The results suggest that 'Street Triage' can be seen as an effective way of diverting

patients away from a S136 referral, reducing the burden on increasingly stretched psychiatric resources.

References:

1. Department of Health (1983). *The Mental Health Act 1983*. London; The Stationery Office.
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3. O'Brien, A. Zisman, S (2014) A retrospective cohort study describing six months of admissions under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act; the problem of alcohol misuse. *Med Sci and Law* [Online] Available from: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24966337> (Accessed June 2015)
4. Brown Michael (2013) *Mental Health Cop. Street Triage* [Online} Available from: <https://mentalhealthcop.wordpress.com/2013/05/18/street-triage> (Accessed June 2015)