

Improving the Patient Referral and Assessment Journey in an Urban Adult Mental Health Team

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Objective

To identify, measure and change barriers in the referral and assessment procedure in CHO1 Sligo Town AMHT.

Background

Urban psychiatry in the Covid19 pandemic has experienced a uniform increase in referrals due in part to the existing psychosocial problems intensified by the economic and social shutdown of society. In the context of a lack of increase in resources, there is a need for identification and review of current problems within the referral and assessment procedure in order to improve provision of safe and effective clinical care to an increasing number of service users.

Methods

Team members interested in spearheading change were identified through informal discussion and a project meeting was held with key stake holders creating a project charter. Using a suite of quality improvement tools from the HSE Quality Toolkit such as process mapping, SWOT analysis and the 5 Why's method issues that could be measured and potentially rectified were studied in Aug 2021. PDSA cycle regular review meetings were held and a new Service Operation Policy was created to address the issues with follow-up audit in Sept 2021 and Dec 2021 using Microsoft Excel to record and analyse.



Conclusion

The findings illustrate the current issues impacting patient flow and care in an adult CMHT and demonstrate intervention using a quality improvement approach can be successful. There is an opportunity in the preparing for the return of face-to-face clinics to use these findings and this approach to look at further quality improvement interventions to improve patient experience and pathways in the adult MDT team.

