

Psychiatry & Psychological Syndromes

November 01-02,2021

WEBINAR

Natasia Chrysodonta et. al., J Psychol Psychother 2021, Volume 11

The confidence of paediatric doctors in the emergency assessment of children and young people with mental health concerns

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Mental health illness places a significant global disease burden for illness and injury in children and young adults. When these patients present in mental health crisis they pose a significant risk of harm to themselves, relatives and health care providers. It is essential that all parties involved in the management of these patients have adequate training and feel confident to provide care to children and young adults presenting to the emergency department with mental health difficulties. The paediatric trainees at Barnet Hospital in London have informally expressed their desire to further their competencies in this area in order to improve the safety and quality of care offered to this cohort of patients. A staff survey was performed with the aim to establish the level of confidence of Paediatric trainee doctors to manage children and young people, age 0-19 years of age, who present with mental health difficulties in the emergency department of Barnet Hospital. A questionnaire was used with a total of 13 questions. A total of 10 questions required responses on a likert scale and 3 questions required a free text response. The questionnaires were placed in the Paediatric doctors office, from where they were collected and returned to. All questionnaires were submitted anonymously over a 3 week period in March 2021. The questionnaire showed that 52% of Paediatric trainee doctors are frequently concerned for the safety of this cohort of patients presenting to the emergency department. Only 16% of Paediatric trainee doctors are satisfied that they have received appropriate training to effectively engage and safely manage these patients. Based on these findings a training plan will be created to focus on the learning needs of Paediatric trainee doctors in our department.

Biography

Natasia Chrysodonta completed her medical degree at the University of Bristol and did her MSc degree in Genomic Medicine at Queen Mary University. She is a Paediatric Registrar at Barnet Hospital in London. She has an interest in Child Mental Health.