

Violence on psychiatric in-patient units: what can be done?

Zerin Atakan

There is evidence of an increase in violence on in-patient units (James *et al.* 1990), compared with earlier studies (Fottrell, 1980). This is also reflected in the number of articles published on violence. Rosenbaum (1991) reviewed the literature from 1935 to 1988. Before 1968 no articles were published but by 1988, 32 had appeared. A review of leading textbooks during the same period found little or no reference to violence until the early 1970s. This finding does not mean that violence did not exist in mental hospitals previously, yet it may not have been as frequent or thought sufficiently serious to warrant research interest. An additional factor, especially in the pre-neuroleptic era, may have been the containment of patient violence by staff violence.

Why has the interest in violence increased?

A number of explanations can be considered. These are discussed below.

'Psychosis wards'

Changes introduced by the Department of Health have led to major changes in how mental health services operate, especially with the implementation of Community Care. With the closure of large mental hospitals there has been a significant loss of beds, in-patient units, especially in inner city areas, have become 'psychosis wards', where the atmosphere can be charged, the disturbance level very high and patients' duration of stay often short, to make room for other more disturbed patients (MILMIS project group, 1995). Research indicates that the best predictors of assaultiveness are disorder related variables (Miller *et al.* 1993). Schizophrenia, mania, organic psychoses, substance abuse and personality disorders are especially associated with violent behaviour. It is not surprising that wards, with a high

turnover, high percentage of detained patients, high bed-occupancy rate and too many disturbed psychotic patients are exposed to violence.

Court Diversion Schemes and lack of provision for medium secure beds

Following the Reed Report and the development of court diversion schemes, additional patients with complex needs are being identified from the penal system and offered psychiatric treatment. Although most of these patients need out-patient care (Exworthy & Parrott, 1994), some are diverted to in-patient units, with 72% being admitted to open wards or intensive treatment units (Gulfe, personal communication). These patients may have already been exposed to violence or in some cases are being charged with crimes related to violence. Although most can be managed in open ward settings, a small but significant minority require treatment in more secure environments, where specialised care and rehabilitation can be delivered. The lack of intensive treatment units and the great difficulty in finding medium secure beds are now daily problems for inner city psychiatrists. These patients, frustrated and overstimulated in highly charged acute admission wards, are more likely to display violence.

Substance abuse

With the widespread increase of substance abuse, the 'double diagnosis' is a common occurrence in most psychiatric wards, especially in large cities. Some of the most vulnerable young patients, who have almost nothing else going for them, misuse various substances such as crack-cocaine, cannabis, amphetamines and alcohol. These alone can induce aggressive behaviour but their use also means that the violent culture of the 'drug scene' is brought to the ward.

Psychiatric Patient Violence

Susan Stefan



Psychiatric Patient Violence:

Violence in Mental Health Settings Dirk Richter, Richard Whittington, 2006-12-22 Despite great improvement in service delivery patient violence remains a major problem at mental health facilities Focusing equally on causes management and prevention this groundbreaking book represents the state of knowledge on this crucial topic Violence in Mental Health Settings brings together salient theories valuable data and real world interventions in one accessible volume The contributors include psychiatrists nurses researchers and academics many affiliated with the European Violence in Psychiatry Research Group offering an integrative context for understanding patient aggression and identifying areas where research is lacking Chapters review the latest theories of violence proven prevention strategies and examples of positive organizational change Practical highlights include Assessing and measuring risk self versus other reporting scales How the ward environment can contribute to violence or its prevention Best practice guidelines for verbal physical and pharmaceutical interventions Training issues and course development in violence management Professional coping after patient attacks Developing a non violent culture at the institutional level Throughout the material is illustrated liberally with graphs and clinical case examples and coverage bridges the patient rights and zero tolerance ends of the spectrum Therapists nurses social workers and counselors in hospitals and other inpatient and community facilities will find Violence in Mental Health Settings a source of vital insights and ideas for future policy Regardless of one's setting or specialty the authors share a critical aim with their readers a safer and more humane experience

Patient Violence and the Clinician Burr Eichelman, Anne C. Hartwig, 1995 Patient Violence and the Clinician presents clinically relevant information on violent patients and how clinicians can deal with threats of potential violence in their everyday practice This book describes the clinical information known about the characteristics of assaultive patients and the characteristics of their assaults It also reviews special issues of clinician safety related to women psychiatric residents and psychiatric nurses Patient Violence and the Clinician provides concrete strategies for enhancing clinician safety through architecture alarm systems and behavioral strategies It addresses staff issues and the humane treatment of violent patients This book helps the clinician think about the cultural issues that surround treatment of violent patients before violence erupts

Understanding and Treating Violent Psychiatric Patients Martha L. Crowner, 2008-11-01 One of the major challenges for mental health professionals today is to successfully treat violent patients The mental health professional is obligated to go beyond containment and control to provide understanding complete assessment and accurate diagnosis and humane and effective treatment Understanding and Treating Violent Psychiatric Patients is a one of a kind comprehensive guide to assessment management understanding and treatment of violent patients The first section encompasses practical guides to treatment for both children and adults It discusses commonly encountered problems in the treatment of violent adult inpatients and includes a brief guide to pharmacological treatments A chapter is devoted to the treatment of abnormal aggression in children and adolescents The

second section delves into a more conceptual and broadly focused approach to understanding violent patients It covers the relationship between dissociation and violence as well as the relationship between psychiatric disorders and violence and addresses impulse control and the treatment of impulsive patients Heavily researched and clinically focused this new title is a must read for psychiatrists psychologists psychiatric social workers psychiatric nurses or any mental health professional needing a better approach to understanding and treating violent patients *Emergency Department Treatment of the Psychiatric Patient* Susan Stefan,2006-03-16 In *Emergency Department Treatment of the Psychiatric Patient* Dr Stefan uses research surveys and statutory and litigation materials to examine problems with emergency department care for clients with psychiatric disorders She relies on interviews with emergency department nurses doctors and psychiatrists as well as surveys of people with psychiatric disabilities to present the perspectives of both the individuals seeking treatment and those providing it This eye opening book explores the structural pressures on emergency departments and identifies the burdens and conflicts that undermine their efforts to provide compassionate care to people in psychiatric crisis Book Jacket

Psychiatric & Mental Health Nursing - E-Book Ruth Elder,Debra Nizette,Katie Evans,2011-06-02 The new edition of *Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* focuses on practice in mental health and psychiatric care integrating theory and the realities of practice Mental wellness is featured as a concept and the consideration of a range of psychosocial factors helps students contextualise mental illness and psychiatric disorders The holistic approach helps the student and the beginning practitioner understand the complex causation of mental illness its diagnosis effective interventions and treatments and the client s experience of mental illness **Resolving Ethical Dilemmas** Bernard Lo,2012-01-03 This timely Fourth Edition offers clinicians expert guidance in approaching a wide range of ethical dilemmas and developing an action plan Most chapters include real life sample cases that the author walks through discussing the salient issues and how to approach them This edition includes a new chapter on ethical issues in cross cultural medicine and new material on conscientious objection by physicians in reproductive health and other areas Other topics addressed include disclosure of errors to patients gifts to physicians from drug companies involuntary psychiatric treatment genomic medicine and ethical issues during public health emergencies such as pandemics The updated discussion of organ transplantation includes increasing the donor pool and non heart beating donors **Psychiatric Nursing** Mary Ann Boyd,2008 The AJN Book of the Year award winning textbook

Psychiatric Nursing Contemporary Practice is now in its thoroughly revised updated Fourth Edition Based on the biopsychosocial model of psychiatric nursing this text provides thorough coverage of mental health promotion assessment and interventions in adults families children adolescents and older adults Features include psychoeducation checklists therapeutic dialogues NCLEX notes vignettes of famous people with mental disorders and illustrations showing the interrelationship of the biologic psychologic and social domains of mental health and illness This edition reintroduces the important chapter on sleep disorders and includes a new chapter on forensic psychiatry A bound in CD ROM and companion

Website offer numerous student and instructor resources including Clinical Simulations and questions about movies involving mental disorders

The Psychiatric Report Alec Buchanan, Michael A. Norko, 2011-07-07 The written report is central to the practice of psychiatry in legal settings It is required of mental health professionals acting as expert witnesses in criminal cases civil litigation situations child custody proceedings and risk assessments This book provides a theoretical background to psychiatric writing for the law and a practical guide to the preparation of the report The first section addresses practical and ethical concerns including the conduct of the forensic psychiatric evaluation conflicts of interest record keeping and confidentiality The second section contains practical and detailed advice on preparing various types of report including reports for use in criminal and civil litigation civil commitment hearings and child custody proceedings A final section covers special issues arising during report preparation including the use of psychological tests and the detection of malingering This is an essential guide for anyone required to write a psychiatric report

What Works for Forensic Psychiatric Patients: From Treatment Evaluations to Short and Long-Term Outcomes Björn Hofvander, Katarina Howner, James Tapp, 2021-01-04

Problematic and Risk Behaviours in Psychosis Alan Meaden, David Hacker, 2010-11-12 In spite of improved access to psychosocial interventions many people with psychosis continue to experience persistent problems which act as significant barriers to their recovery This book investigates risk and problem behaviours in psychosis including staff and service factors that can impede the delivery of effective care Problematic and Risk Behaviours in Psychosis provides a new approach for assessment formulation and intervention within such problem behaviours in a team context Of particular interest will be an outline of the SAFE Shared Assessment Formulation and Education approach an integrative model for understanding risk and problematic behaviour shared risk assessment and management processes approaches to reducing team and carer barriers to effective care the use of CBT in day to day interactions with clients a set of formulation driven strategies for managing problematic behaviours case studies and vignettes providing guidance and highlighting the benefits of the approach This book will have particular appeal to professionals working in specialist community hospital based and residential services who often struggle to help those with the most complex mental health problems who are hardest to reach It is also an excellent resource for those engaged in training in psychological therapies risk assessment and management

Psychiatric Patient Violence Book Review: Unveiling the Magic of Language

In an electronic era where connections and knowledge reign supreme, the enchanting power of language has are more apparent than ever. Its power to stir emotions, provoke thought, and instigate transformation is truly remarkable. This extraordinary book, aptly titled "**Psychiatric Patient Violence**," compiled by a very acclaimed author, immerses readers in a captivating exploration of the significance of language and its profound affect our existence. Throughout this critique, we shall delve into the book is central themes, evaluate its unique writing style, and assess its overall influence on its readership.

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Table of Contents Psychiatric Patient Violence

1. Understanding the eBook Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - Psychiatric Patient Violence User Reviews and Ratings
 - Psychiatric Patient Violence and Bestseller Lists
5. Accessing Psychiatric Patient Violence Free and Paid eBooks

- Psychiatric Patient Violence Public Domain eBooks
- Psychiatric Patient Violence eBook Subscription Services
- Psychiatric Patient Violence Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Psychiatric Patient Violence eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Psychiatric Patient Violence Compatibility with Devices
 - Psychiatric Patient Violence Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - Interactive Elements Psychiatric Patient Violence
- 8. Staying Engaged with Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Psychiatric Patient Violence
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Psychiatric Patient Violence
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - Setting Reading Goals Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Psychiatric Patient Violence
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources
- 13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development

- Exploring Educational eBooks

14. Embracing eBook Trends

- Integration of Multimedia Elements
- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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