

“RACH CED SHORT STAY UNIT- ARE WE MEETING THE STAFFING STANDARDS OF THE RCPCH STANDARDS FOR SHORT STAY PAEDIATRIC ASSESSMENT UNIT (SSPAU)? ”

[ROYAL ALEXANDRA CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL]

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INTRODUCTION

“Short-Stay Paediatric Assessment Units have emerged as an increasingly common component of urgent and emergency care for children and as a hub for the provision and coordination of emergency ambulatory care.”

“Specific staffing arrangements will depend on local arrangements but should promote senior assessment and decision making at the earliest opportunity in the pathway. Senior review at the time of admission to the SSPAU, either in the emergency department or on the SSPAU is key to ensuring appropriate decision-making.”

BACKGROUND

The Royal Alexandra Children’s Hospital (RACH) Children’s Emergency Department (CED) operates a 4 bed co-located Short Stay Paediatric Assessment Unit (SSPAU) which is staffed from within the CED template. This means that senior clinicians need to divide their time between reviewing new attendances in the CED and reviewing those patients already admitted to the SSPAU. This need can create a tension and a challenge.

RCPCH Standards for SSPAU

[24] Every infant, child or young person on the SSU with an acute medical problem is seen by a healthcare professional with the appropriate competencies to work on the tier-two (middle grade) paediatric rota within four hours of admission to the unit.

[25] Every infant, child or young person on the SSU with an acute medical problem is seen by a consultant paediatrician within 14 hours of admission to the unit, with more immediate review as required according to illness severity or if a member of staff is concerned.

AIM OF THE STUDY

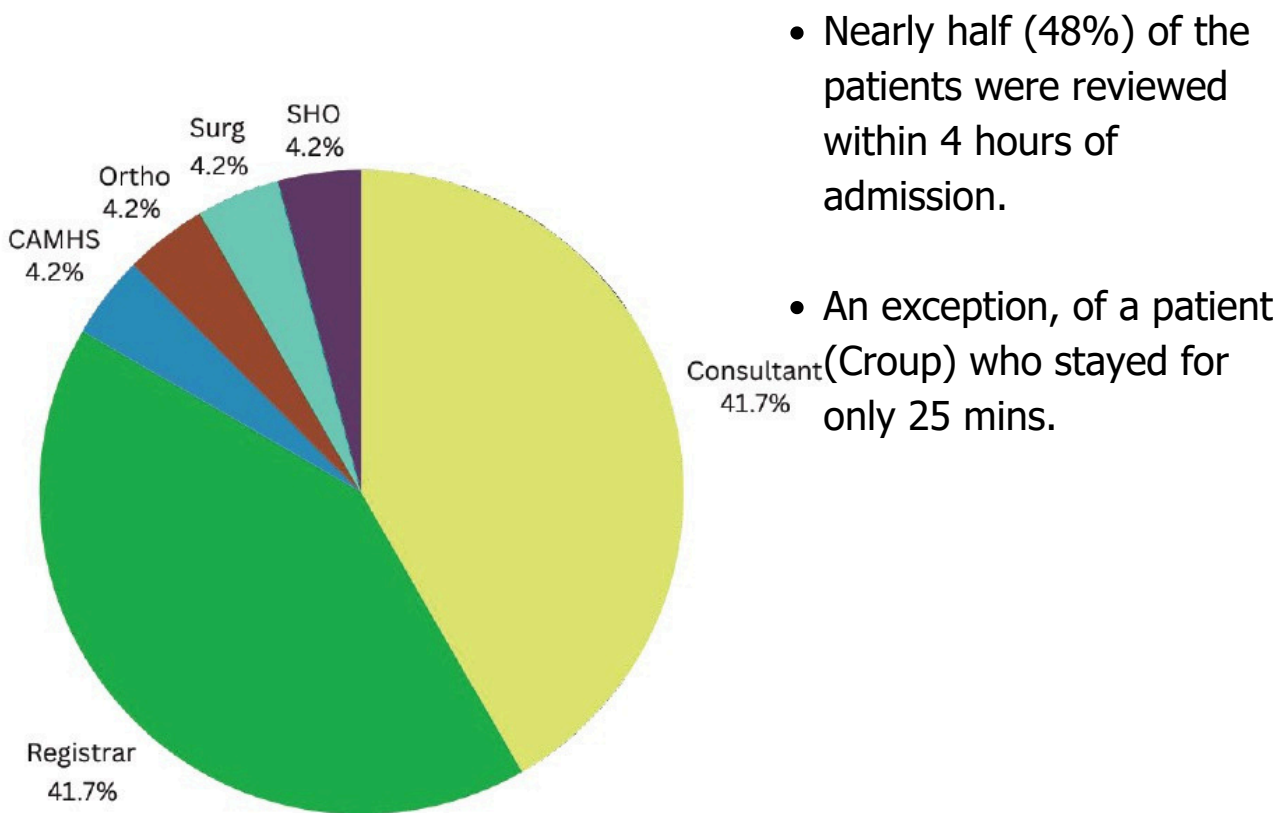
- To audit the current practice in RACH CED SSPAU.
- To measure current practice against RCPCH standard.
- To recognize where improvements can be made for patient safety.

METHODOLOGY

- **Inclusion Criteria:**
-Children <17yrs age admitted to RACH SSU Jan 2024 with any complaint (medical, surgical, mental health).
- **Exclusion Criteria:**
-Not meeting inclusion criteria.
- **Identifying your sample:**
-Review of SSPAU bed state sheets/clipboard.
-Convenience sample notes from SSPAU discharge tray.

RESULTS

Table 1. Patients reviewed within 4 hours.



KEY FINDINGS

- 68% of the patients remained in the SSU beyond 4 hours, and none exceeded 24 hours stay.
- 25% of this population were patients waiting to be reviewed by the CAMHS team. During their stay, hourly observations were maintained by the nursing staff.
- 8% of patients were Nurse led discharges, mostly patients with Viral Induced Wheeze.
- 8% of patients received no middle grade review.
- An average of 5- 6 patients per day were admitted to the SSPAU.
- Peak time of discharges were done at 9am, 11am and midnight.
- A significant proportion of patients were discharged to their homes.
- Most patients had at least one review by a middle grade doctor before discharge.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provision of adequate middle grade staffing at Peak hours of discharge.
- Provision of 2 Consultants during the daytime to over both activities at the Emergency Department and review of Short-Stay Unit.
- Establish protocols in the department for review of patients in the Short Stay Unit.

REFERENCES

(1) https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/sites/default/files/SSPAU_College_Standards_21.03.2017_final.pdf

Table 2. Patients reviewed within 14 hours.

