

Abstract

Background: Successful and sustained community living has long been a challenge faced by chronic psychiatric patients after their discharge from long hospital stay. EXITERS programme was launched in 2000 to enhance the support to extended-care psychiatric patients' need for reintegration in the community.

Objective: To develop a predictor model for rehospitalization within 2 years among psychiatric patients discharged under EXITERS programme.

Subjects: Patients discharged under EXITERS programme during a five-year period from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2008, both dates inclusive.

Method: A retrospective cohort study was conducted. Subjects were subgrouped into readmitters and non-readmitters naturalistically at 2 years post-discharge. Statistical analysis was applied to compare the two subgroups against socio-demographic variables, clinical variables and BPRS scores taken during EXITERS programme. A predictor model was constructed using logistic regression and survival analysis.

Results: Cumulative rehospitalization rates were 3.1% at 1 month, 5.8% at 3 months, 22.7% at 1 year and 33.6% at 2 years. Psychiatric comorbidities, number of previous rehospitalizations and young age upon discharge were significant predictors of rehospitalization risk.

Conclusion: At-risk patients could be identified by using the predictive model to enable more holistic rehabilitation, careful pre-discharge planning and vigilant aftercare to optimize successful and sustained community living. Clinicians and policy planners should facilitate better resource allocation and development of novel interventional strategies to fit the unmet needs of these at-risk patients.