

Abstract

Background: It has been a challenging task to prevent repeated admission to psychiatric hospitals in patients with schizophrenia, especially for those more fragile patients attending psychiatric day hospitals, and thus defeating the purpose of de-institutionalization.

Aim: To predict the risk factors of subsequent admission to psychiatric hospitals in day-patients with schizophrenia in Kowloon East Cluster of Hong Kong.

Method: A retrospective cohort study was conducted on all patients with schizophrenia between the age 18 to 64, with an index admission to psychiatric day hospitals having fallen between the years 2000 to 2005. A total of 379 patients having schizophrenia were followed up from their admission to a day hospital until the end of 2007, on their clinical characteristics and the association with subsequent admission and time to admission, using logistic regression and Cox proportional hazard regression, respectively.

Results: Schizophrenia day-patients who had subsequent inpatient admission, were characterized by concurrent medical illness, more previous episodes of inpatient admission, a shorter length of stay in a day hospital and lack of paid employment. Survival analysis by the Cox proportional hazard regression model predicted the five-year survival rate without the need of subsequent inpatient admission was 62.6%, and the mean survival time was 1139 days since admission from day hospital, whereas a longer assessment interval in day hospitals was associated with delaying the time for admission.

Conclusion: Clinicians should monitor more vigilantly for these day-patients for their physical health, more readily to liaise with physicians, emphasize on healthy lifestyle, drug compliance and insight through multi-disciplinary approach, collaborate with other service providers to facilitate paid employment, and promote stable patients to the next level of rehabilitation to avoid emergence of chronic day-patients.