Using ambulatory care (AMB) score to identify patients suitable for ambulatory emergency care (AEC)

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Introduction

Royal College of Physicians’ acute care toolkit no.10 mentions the usage of AMB score as one of the measures of identifying patients suitable for ambulatory emergency care (AEC).

Our project aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the AMB scoring system by using it to identify patients from our acute medical admissions cohort who can be managed in our ambulatory care area.

Materials and methods

All acute medical admissions over one weekend were prospectively assessed using a proforma detailing age, presenting complaint, provisional diagnosis and purpose of admission. The admitting medical physicians used their clinical judgement in establishing the suitability for ambulatory care. AMB score was then calculated on all of these patients to check its effectiveness.

Results

38 patients were included out of which 22 were males and 16 were females. Average age was 68.2 years, range 15 – 97 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMB Score</th>
<th>Number of patients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All 18 patients with an AMB score <5 were unsuitable for AEC.

Only 6 (30%) of the 20 patients with an AMB score ≥5 were suitable for AEC.

Conclusions

All 18 patients who had an AMB score < 5 were deemed unsuitable for AEC, which indicated a good predictability for patients requiring admission.

Only 30% of patients with an AMB score ≥5 were deemed suitable for AEC, indicating the need for additional criteria to help make this decision.

The findings of this project helped us to identify patients with ambulatory sensitive conditions who were currently being admitted, and also enabled us to create additional criteria for selecting these patients (see below). These have been successfully introduced in our Emergency Department, and we plan to review them to evaluate their potential for effectively identifying patients for AEC.

Criteria for AEC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMB Score</th>
<th>Suitable for AEC</th>
<th>Not suitable for AEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;5</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥5</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All 18 patients with an AMB score <5 were unsuitable for AEC.

Only 6 (30%) of the 20 patients with an AMB score ≥5 were suitable for AEC.

Literature cited

1. Royal College of Physicians’ Acute Care Tool Kit number 10. https://www.rclondon.ac.uk/acute_care_toolkit_10_ambulatory_emergency_care.pdf