Nurse-led screening of acute medical admissions: right-siting and re-admissions

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## Methods

We retrieved anonymised patient data from the hospital’s electronic databases and AIMS manual logs for the period 9 December 2017 to 28 March 2018 (both dates inclusive). Descriptive statistics and the χ² test were done on Microsoft Excel™ 2010. We used two definitions for this study:

- **Right-siting** refers to an admission and subsequent discharge of a patient from AIMS, i.e. with no transfer to any other facility.
- **Re-admission** refers to the discharge of a patient from AIMS, and the subsequent admission of the patient to any discipline in the hospital within 30 days.

## Results

A total of 274 patients were screened. 173 (63.1%) were reviewed by physicians and 101 (36.9%) by AIMS nurses.

(1) **Right-siting**

79 (78.2%) of the patients screened by nurses were suitable for admission to AIMS. Of these, 69 (87.3%) were right-sited. 156 (90.2%) of the patients screened by physicians were admitted, and 139 (89.1%) were right-sited. χ² test was used and there was no significant difference between nurse-led and physician-led screening rates at the 0.01 level (p=0.25).

(2) **Re-admissions**

78 (98%) patients were admitted to AIMS using a nurse-led screening process and 1 (2%) patient was re-admitted within 30 days. As for the 173 patients screened and admitted to AIMS by the physicians, 7 (4%) patients were re-admitted. The χ² test was used and there was no significant difference between nurse-led and physician-led re-admission rates at the 0.01 level (p=0.24).

## Conclusion

This study suggests that a nurse-led screening protocol results in right-siting and re-admission rates comparable to a physician-led process. With training and clear processes in place, nurses can be empowered to assess and independently admit patients to an acute medical unit. Potential benefits include reduction in delays to admission, prompt, focused nursing care, relief of physician burden, expansion of nursing skill sets and capabilities, increase in self-confidence, and a development of a much stronger professional identity.