



Pergamon

Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

SCIENCE @ DIRECT®

Research in Developmental Disabilities
24 (2003) 247–264

Research
in
Developmental
Disabilities

The experiences of people with developmental disability in Emergency Departments and hospital wards

Teresa Iacono^{*}, Robert Davis

*Centre for Developmental Disability Health Victoria, Monash University, Suite 202,
3 Chester Street, Oakleigh, Melbourne, Vic., Australia*

Received 21 August 2002; received in revised form 17 December 2002; accepted 21 January 2003

Abstract

The aim of this study was to determine whether needs of people with developmental disability were met during visits to Emergency Departments and stays in hospital. Responses to a questionnaire were obtained from 328 clients of three Victorian organizations. Of 119 respondents who had attended a hospital within a year of completing the questionnaire, most indicated that their needs were met in the areas of hydration and nutrition, medication, mobility and discharge. There were significant associations between getting enough to drink and being able to move from a bed, and having a support person stay with the patient. These results suggested a great reliance on support people during hospitalizations. Issues raised in the questionnaire were explored in follow-up interviews with 11 respondents or their support people. Reliance on support people emerged as a strong theme in interview transcripts, as did hospital staff's negative attitudes, and lack of skills and knowledge in developmental disability. These results are discussed in light of recent literature and the need to address issues in the larger context of the needs of support people and hospital staff.

© 2003 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

Keywords: developmental disability; hospitals; health

The movement of people with developmental disabilities out of state institutions into community homes has often been found to result in improvements in adaptive behavior skills (Kim, Larson, & Lakin, 2001; Young, Ashman, Sigafos, & Grevell, 2001) and opportunities to make choices (Young et al., 2001); decreases in

^{*} Corresponding author. Tel.: +61-3-9564-7511; fax: +61-3-9564-8330.

E-mail address: Teresa.Iacono@med.monash.edu.au (T. Iacono).

maladaptive or challenging behaviors have also been reported (Kim et al., 2001). Concern has been expressed, however, about problems that people with developmental disability, who live in the community, experience in accessing adequate health care services (Beange, 1996; Beange & Bauman, 1990). Such inadequacies appear to result from health care providers' lack of knowledge, skills and confidence in working with people with developmental disability (Lennox, Diggins, & Ugoni, 2000; Lennox & Kerr, 1997; McConkey & Truesdale, 2000), and negative attitudes towards this group (Hart, 1998; Paris, 1993; Slevin & Sines, 1996).

Beange, McElduff, and Baker (1995) documented a high incidence of health problems (e.g., hypertension, epilepsy) in adults with disabilities in an Australian community in comparison to the general population. Similar findings have been obtained in studies from other countries, such as the UK (Turner & Moss, 1996; Wilson & Haire, 1990) and USA (Criscione, Kastner, O'Brien, & Nathanson, 1994). There is evidence to indicate that this high incidence of health problems and apparent lack of access to community-based physicians with expertise in developmental disability results in their frequent reliance on hospital services (Criscione, Walsh, & Kastner, 1995; MENCAP, 1998). In studies conducted by MENCAP, a UK-based organization for people with "learning disabilities," people were found to attend their GPs less frequently, but visit hospitals much more frequently than do people in the general population (MENCAP, 1998). A reason offered by MENCAP for this high rate of hospital usage was people with intellectual disabilities'¹ need for specialist services. Criscione et al. (1995) argued that community physicians in the USA tend to refer people with developmental disability to hospitals as a means of accessing such specialist services.

Studies in the USA also indicate that people with developmental disability are over-represented amongst hospital inpatients. Walsh, Kastner, and Criscione (1997), in a New Jersey statewide retrospective study of hospital records from 1983 to 1991, found that, although the number of admissions and length of stay for the general population remained generally stable, the figures for people with developmental disability rose substantially. The increases across the 9-year period for this group were 54% for admissions and 42% for the number of days per stay. In terms of total costs for hospital stays, there was an increase of 125% for the general population in contrast to 207% for people with developmental disability. In comparing children and adults, Walsh et al. (1997) found that adult hospitalizations accounted for the increases, with the number of admissions and length of stays for children with developmental disability reflecting the stable pattern of the general population. These results led the researchers to suggest that the increased hospital usage was an outcome of deinstitutionalization.

Increases in hospital admissions and length of stays for people with developmental disability is likely to present problems if the hospitals are staffed by health care professionals with limited knowledge about developmental disability. Concern has been expressed about the lack of content on developmental disability in undergraduate curriculum for both doctors (Lennox & Diggins, 1999) and nurses (Benchot, 1986; Shanley & Guest, 1995; Stanley, 1999). Of perhaps greater concern have been reports of entrenched negative attitudes of doctors and

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات