**Understanding Emergency Department Staff’s Perceptions of Pyschiatric Patients and the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in their Evaluation and Management**

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**Principal Investigator**: Vidya Eswaran / Morgan Shields

**Study Team**: Ernesto Romo

**Study Site(s)**: n/a

**Funding Source**: n/a

**Study Population**:Emergency department staff including emergency medicine physicians (attendings and residents), advanced practice providers, nurses, patient care technicians, paramedics and security staff. We will recruit staff from the emergency departments via emails sent to a convenience sample of emergency department medical directors throughout the United States via direct emails from the study group.

**Study Design**: Survey study

**Sample Size**: In 2018, it was estimated that there were 67,267 emergency medicine practitioners in the United States including 47,260 physicians and 15,198 advanced practice providers (physician assistants and nurse pracitioners)1. It is estimated that there are over 115,000 emergency medicine nurses nationwide2. Additional ED staff include patient care technicians and security guards. Thus by using a population size of 180,000, a margin of error of 95% and z score of 1.96, we intend to recruit 400 individuals to participate in the study.

**Study Duration**:The survey will remain open for 3 months or until we hit our recruitment goal.

**Objectives**:

The proposed study will explore the attitudes and beliefs of emergency department clinicians and staff regarding emergency department patients experiencing mental health crises and the role of coercive methods (restraints and seclusion) in their management.

**Background and Significance**: The proportion of patients seen in emergency departments (EDs) has been increasing in recent years.3,4 Patients experiencing mental health crises have unique needs which can be incompatible with the often chaotic, noisy, and resource-limited setting of most EDs.5 This environment can also be one that leads ED staff to lean on pre-existing implicit and explicit biases in the care of patients.6 Many studies have shown that ED patients seeking psychiatric care report negative experiences regarding their time in the ED.7 Prior work have also shown that ED physicians and nurses report challenges and biases in the care of patients with mental health conditions including fears related to patient injury and risk of violent injury.8–11 Many Emergency Medicine specialty organizations have made workplace violence towards ED staff a priority.12,13

Best practices suggest restraints and seclusion should be avoided when possible.14 Studies have shown that patients who are placed in restraints often have increased distrust in the healthcare system and lack of engagement upon ED discharge.15–17 Many have also demonstrated that physical restraints are applied disparately based on patient demographic factors, including race.18

In this study we aim to expand on the prior literature by including participants beyond physicians and nurses and to focus on perceptions of the implementation of coercive methods (restraint and seclusion) in this patient population and the role institutional and regulatory policies have in their use.

**Recruitment Plan:** All adults ages 18 years or older who self-report that an ED is their primary place of work and that they hold a patient-facing position are eligible for inclusion in the study. There are no specific exclusion criteria.

We will email medical directors and program directors at ACGME-certified residency programs around the country to encourage participation in the study. We will also send the survey to a convenience sample of emergency medicine physicians that the study team knows personally.

The survey will be open for 3 months. Directors will receive one email per month, for a total of 3 emails, reminding them to send the survey to their departments.

All individuals who participate in the survey will be given the opportunity to enter a raffle for a $50.00 gift card. At the completion of the study, 10 individuals will be randomly selected to receive a gift card.

**Statistical Analysis Plan**: All but two open-ended questions at the end of the survey will be coded either categorically or continuously. We will describe univariate statistics (mean, median, standard deviation or proportion) of sample demographics as a whole as well as responses to key questions about restraint use and policies. This will be followed by bivariate analyses of groups based on ED role and other demographic characteristics such as race, gender, years of practice, and characteristics of respondents’ primary worksite, and then followed by fully adjusted regression models. The final two questions will be open-ended related and will be inductively coded to produce salient themes.

**Informed Consent Process**: At the onset of the survey, respondents will be shown an information sheet regarding the study. By proceeding with the survey, they will indicate their consent to be included.

**Risk/Benefit**: The principal risk to participants in this study is a breach of confidentiality. The risk of loss of confidentiality will be minimized as all responses will be held on secure WUSTL severs including WUSTL Box accessed exclusively using University-owned computers. We will limit data access to members of the study team who will be conducting the data management and analyses.

All individuals who participate in the survey will be given the opportunity to enter a raffle for a $50.00 gift card. While all participants will not directly benefit from this study, the findings will improve the understanding of ED staff and clinicians’ perceptions of the care of patients in mental health crises and the role that policies play in providing high-quality care.

**Data Storage**: Data extracted for this study and any datasets generated for analyses will be stored in a study-specific WUSTL BOX folder, according to the standards and best practices established by WU.

**Conflict of Interest**: None

**Data Elements**: See attached survey

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**Recruitment Email**

Dear Colleagues,

We are excited to invite you to participate in a study on the perceptions and attitudes of emergency department (ED) clinicians and staff on the care provided to patients experiencing mental health crisis in the ED. We are especially interested in your thoughts on the use of coercive methods (restraints and seclusion) and how institutional and regulatory policies do and do not support the important work you do.

We are recruiting US-based **physicians, advanced practice providers, nurses, technicians, sitters, security guards, and other patient-facing staff** whose primary worksite is an emergency department.

You have received this email because you are listed as either a ED medical director or Emergency Medicine Residency program director. **We hope that you can complete this survey yourself, as well as forward this invitation to those who work in your department.**

Participation Details:

Activity: You will complete a web-based survey which will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Incentive: After completion of the survey you will have the opportunity to enter a raffle for a $50.00 Amazon gift card. 10 winners will be selected at the close of the study.

Contact Information: Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact:

Vidya Eswaran, Principal Investigator, at vidya@wustl.edu

Morgan Shields, Principal Investigator, at mshields@wustl.edu

SURVEY LINK: XXXX

Thank you for your attention and your commitment to patient care.

Best regards,

Vidya Eswaran

**Consent Statement**

We invite you to participate in a 15 minute survey to understand Emergency Department staff and clinicians’ perspectives on the care of patients in mental health crisis in the Emergency Department. This survey will be administered to physicians, advanced practice providers, nurses, paramedics, technicians, security guards and other staff in Emergency Medicine

By completing the survey, you are consenting to participate in the study. If you feel uncomfortable about any questions, you may choose to not answer that question. Up to 400 people will take part in this study across the nation.

You will not benefit personally. However, we hope that others may benefit in the future from what we learn as a result of this study.

You will not have any costs for being in this research study.

You will not be paid for being in this research study, though you will have the opportunity to enter a raffle for a $50.00 gift card on completion of the study.

Your decision to participate in the study will not impact your employment and your supervisors will not be made aware of your decision to participate or your responses.

Only members of the research team will have access to your responses. Findings from this study will only be reported in aggregate. Participation in this survey is voluntary. All data collected as part of this study will be secured in encrypted machines behind university firewalls.

Any report or article that we write will not include information that can directly identify you. The journals that publish these reports or articles require that we share your information that was collected for this study with others to make sure the results of this study are correct and help develop new ideas for research. Your information will be shared in a way that cannot directly identify you.

Federal regulatory agencies and Washington University, including the Washington University Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies) and the Human Research Protection Office may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in the study, you may stop participating at any time. Any data that was collected as part of this study will remain as part of the study records unless you request the data be removed. If you decide not to take part in the study or if you stop participating at any time, you won’t be penalized or lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

If you do not wish to participate in this study, you may choose not to access the survey or may exit the survey at any time without completing it. Because the surveys are anonymous, we will not be able to identify and remove your data after the survey is completed.

We encourage you to ask questions. If you have questions about the research study itself, please contact Dr. Vidya Eswaran (vidya@wustl.edu), Dr. Ernesto Romo (eromo@wustl.edu), or Dr. Morgan Shields (mshields@wustl.edu). If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Washington University Human Research Protection Office at 660 South Euclid Avenue, Campus Box 8089, St. Louis, MO 63110, 1-(800)-438-0445 or email hrpo@wustl.edu. General information about being a research participant can be found on the Human Research Protection Office web site, http://hrpo.wustl.edu. To offer input about your experiences as a research participant or to speak to someone other than the research staff, call the Human Research Protection Office at the number above.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this research study.

Do you consent to participate in this study?

[ ] Yes => proceed

[ ] No => exit survey