Background:
- Difficulty found in clearly communicating psychiatric acuity among the treatment team
- Little evidence-based practice on psychiatric acuity tools but proven usefulness in other patient care areas
- Need for a quantitative description of patient and unit acuity

Purpose:
To quantify psychiatric acuity on the Adult Psychotic Disorder unit of Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital as a means of improving the quality of patient care delivered.

Objectives:
- To appropriately allocate nursing resources
- To assist with fair patient assignment loads
- Provide an objective snapshot of patient acuity on the unit at a given time

Methods:
- Unit staff feedback obtained on what “drains” nursing staff resources above the expected workload
- Multidisciplinary group of MD, RN, MHS, and Director of Patient Quality and Safety developed an acuity scale to be implemented on the unit based on feedback
- Acuity tool included both a psychiatric and medical acuity scale
- Staff educated on tool use and implemented on unit for day (7a-3p) and evening (3-11p) shifts

Results:
- Staff feedback assisted in changes to scoring criteria to better fit patient population
- Acuity scores typically decrease from admission to discharge
- MDs reported better understanding of patient status throughout admission

Education of Use:
- RNs to complete acuity tool near the end of each shift
- Psychiatric acuity total score is added to the total medical acuity score to give each patient a total acuity rating
- Acuity distribution: Mild (0-4) Moderate (4-8) High (>8)

Patient Samples:
- A look at patient scores over a one week period
- Provides objective view of patient progress

Implications/Next Steps:
- Continue to assess validity
- Monitor staffing changes with unit acuity
- Assess use on other psychiatric units within VPH
- Integrate tool into HED and OPC
- Continue to obtain staff feedback on relevance

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