Evaluation of a Substance Abuse Screening Tool in the Pediatric Emergency Room

Date: July 12, 2023  
Time: 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.  
Place: 106 Seton Hall

Abstract

Problem: Substance abuse among adolescents is one of the most serious social health problems in the United States. Prevalence of alcohol use in adolescents is as high as 80% whole opioid overdose deaths among adolescents have risen over 50% in the last 10 years. Alcohol, tobacco, and other substance use has also increased among youth and is not being properly evaluated in the pediatric hospital setting.

Methods: This quality improvement project utilized a descriptive statistical analysis. Quantitative data will be collected via prospective chart review. The CRAFFT substance abuse screening tool was administered to a convenience sample of adolescent patients aged 12 to 17 years old, seeking care in the pediatric emergency department. Quantitative data was collected during the emergency department visit. Data collected included number of CRAFFT screenings administered, number of positive CRAFFT screenings, screenings done by SBIRT trained staff, and referrals to treatment needed.

Results: Following the implementation of this QI project, 76 patients were offered the CRAFFT screening, and 62 screenings were completed. Of those screened, 25% (N=16) screened positive with a CRAFFT score of two or higher and were offered a referral to treatment. Of those who were offered a referral to treatment, 44% (N=7) accepted the referral.

Implications for practice: Widespread utilization of the CRAFFT substance abuse screening tool in the pediatric emergency department setting could further identify adolescents at risk and offer them referral to appropriate treatment.

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