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Sørup, Christian Michel; Jacobsen, Peter; Lundager Forberg, Jakob

Published in:

Scandinavian Journal of Trauma, Resuscitation and Emergency Medicine

DOI:

[10.1186/1757-7241-21-S2-A12](https://doi.org/10.1186/1757-7241-21-S2-A12)

Publication date:

2013

Document Version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication](#)

Citation (APA):

Sørup, C. M., Jacobsen, P., & Lundager Forberg, J. (2013). A literature review analysing endorsed performance and quality-in-care measures for emergency department assessment. *Scandinavian Journal of Trauma, Resuscitation and Emergency Medicine*, 21(Suppl. 2), A12. DOI: 10.1186/1757-7241-21-S2-A12

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MEETING ABSTRACT

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A literature review analysing endorsed performance and quality-in-care measures for emergency department assessment

Christian Michel Sørup^{1*}, Peter Jacobsen¹, Jakob Lundager Forberg²

From Proceedings of the 5th Danish Emergency Medicine Conference
Aarhus, Denmark. 18-19 April 2013

Background

Evaluation of the performance of an emergency department (ED) remains a difficult task due to the lack of consensus on performance measures that reflects both high quality and efficiency. Hence, this study describes, maps, and critically evaluates what performance measures that the published literature regards as being most relevant in assessing overall ED performance.

Methods

A systematic literature review in the databases of PubMed, Cochrane Library, and Web of Science of articles on suggested ED performance measures.

Results

A number of articles addressed this study's objective (n = 14 of 46 unique hits). Time intervals and patient-related measures were dominant in the recommendations made in studies from US, UK, Sweden and Canada. Length of stay (LOS), time between patient arrival to initial clinical assessment, and time between patient arrivals to admission are recommended by the majority of studies. Concurrently, 'patients left without being seen' (LWBS), unplanned re-attendance within a maximum of 72 hours, mortality/morbidity, and number of unintended incidents make out the most recommended performance measures related directly to the patient. Performance measures related directly to employees were only stated in two of the 14 included studies. Operational performance measures are deemed covered for by the two clusters 1) time intervals and 2) patient-related performance measures.

Conclusion

54 performance measures have been extracted from 14 studies. ED time intervals are the most recommended performance measures followed by patient centeredness and safety performance measures. ED employee related performance measures are rarely mentioned in the investigated literature. Further work will include working towards consensus agreement on ED performance measures that preferably should include several aspects of performance. Moreover, investigation of the interconnectivity between the performance measures and how to measure if launched initiatives have the wanted effects.

Authors' details

¹Management Engineering, Technical University of Denmark, Denmark. ²The Emergency Department, Hillerød Hospital, Denmark.

Published: 9 September 2013

doi:10.1186/1757-7241-21-S2-A12

Cite this article as: Sørup et al.: A literature review analysing endorsed performance and quality-in-care measures for emergency department assessment. *Scandinavian Journal of Trauma, Resuscitation and Emergency Medicine* 2013 **21**(Suppl 2):A12.

* Correspondence: cmiso@dtu.dk

¹Management Engineering, Technical University of Denmark, Denmark
Full list of author information is available at the end of the article