

Patient Safety and clinical incident reporting in the Accident and Emergency Department

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Abstract of research

Greater focus is needed on improving patient safety in modern healthcare systems and the first step to achieving this is to identify the safety issues arising in healthcare. Research has shown Accident and Emergency to be an error prone environment due to a number of factors such as the range and nature of presenting conditions and the fast turnover of patients. As in all healthcare environments clinical incident reporting in Accident and Emergency is an important method/tool by which safety issues can be identified and a tool which should result in enhanced safety solutions and learning from error.

In this paper we discuss a study evaluating the current clinical reporting system in one Accident and Emergency department of a London teaching hospital and outline the recommendations made by the research team to strengthen the clinical incident reporting system of this department. This research may have important implications for the incident reporting process throughout the National Health Service and in all clinical areas.