



**Service Priorities and Programmes**  
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**Predictors of Early Rehospitalization among Psychiatric Patients Discharged under EXITERS Project**

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**Introduction**

Successful and sustained community living has long been a challenge faced by chronic psychiatric patients after their discharge from extended hospital stay. EXITERS Project was launched in 2000 to enhance the support to these psychiatric patients' need for reintegration in the community.

**Objectives**

To identify patient characteristics predicting rehospitalization within 2 years among extended-care psychiatric patients discharged under EXITERS Project.

**Methodology**

A retrospective cohort study was conducted on patients discharged under EXITERS Project during a five-year period from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2008, both dates inclusive. Subjects were subgrouped into readmitters and non-readmitters naturalistically at 2 years post-discharge. Survival analysis was applied to compare the two subgroups against socio-demographic variables, clinical variables and BPRS scores taken. Patient characteristics predictive of early rehospitalization were identified.

**Result**

Cumulative rehospitalization rates were 3.1% at 1 month, 5.8% at 3 months, 22.7% at 1 year and 33.6% at 2 years. Psychiatric comorbidities, number of previous rehospitalizations and young age upon discharge were significant predictors of early rehospitalization. At-risk patients could be identified by using the predictive characteristics to enable more holistic rehabilitation, careful pre-discharge planning and vigilant aftercare to optimize successful and sustained community living. Clinicians and policy planners should facilitate better resource allocation and development of novel interventional strategies to fit the unmet needs of these at-risk patients.