

Mental Health Assessment Unit (MHAU)

A Therapeutic and EmPATHetic Extension of the Emergency Department

Presented by: Windsor Regional Hospital (WRH)

TOPIC:

In FY2018/19, approximately 9700 patients came to the WRH Emergency Department (ED) requiring Mental Health and Substance Abuse services.

- 970 waited longer than 24 hours in the ED before being moved to the Mental Health program.
- 904 left without being seen (LWBS) or against medical advice (AMA)
- 183 incidents of violence reported during that time period.

GOAL:

Enhance patient experience for our Mental Health patients by expediting care to a specialized and **EmPATHetic** environment.

- Exclude medical etiologies and ensure medical stability. (2)
- Rapidly stabilize the acute crisis (2)
- Avoid coercion (2)
- Treat in the least restrictive setting (2)
- Form a therapeutic alliance (2)
- Formulate an appropriate disposition and aftercare plan (2)



METHODOLOGY:

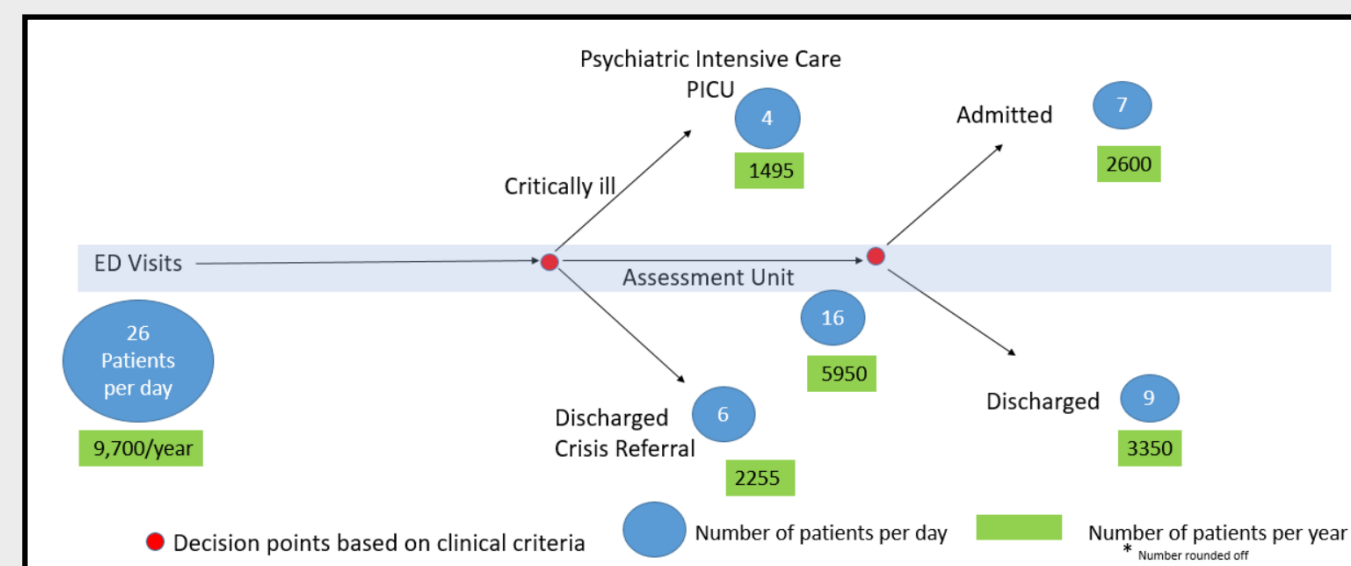
Guiding Principles:

- Create a therapeutic, **EmPATHetic**, multidisciplinary Mental Health Assessment Unit within the Mental Health program.
- To have a sufficient number of PICU beds to ensure that the most critical patients receive intensive psychiatric care in a specialized and secured setting within 60 minutes
- Mental Health patients will be cared for in a controlled and secured environment to improve the patient care experience and improve patient and staff safety.

- A data driven approach was taken to determine the bed needs, two years of historical data was used in a discrete event simulation using the Simul8 software. This determined the volume and distribution of bed spaces required to improve the flow.

EmPATH Unit Aspects Embedded:

- The programs feature a large, comfortable central room or 'milieu' where all patients are situated. (1)
- All patients see a psychiatrist as quickly as possible, and have treatment implemented promptly. (1)



Patient Quotes

“Normally, I’m much more agitated when I come to the hospital, I can’t believe how much calmer I felt coming to this unit”

“I felt so ashamed of myself, If it wasn’t for coming to the unit I would have never come back”

“I hope other hospitals copy this concept”

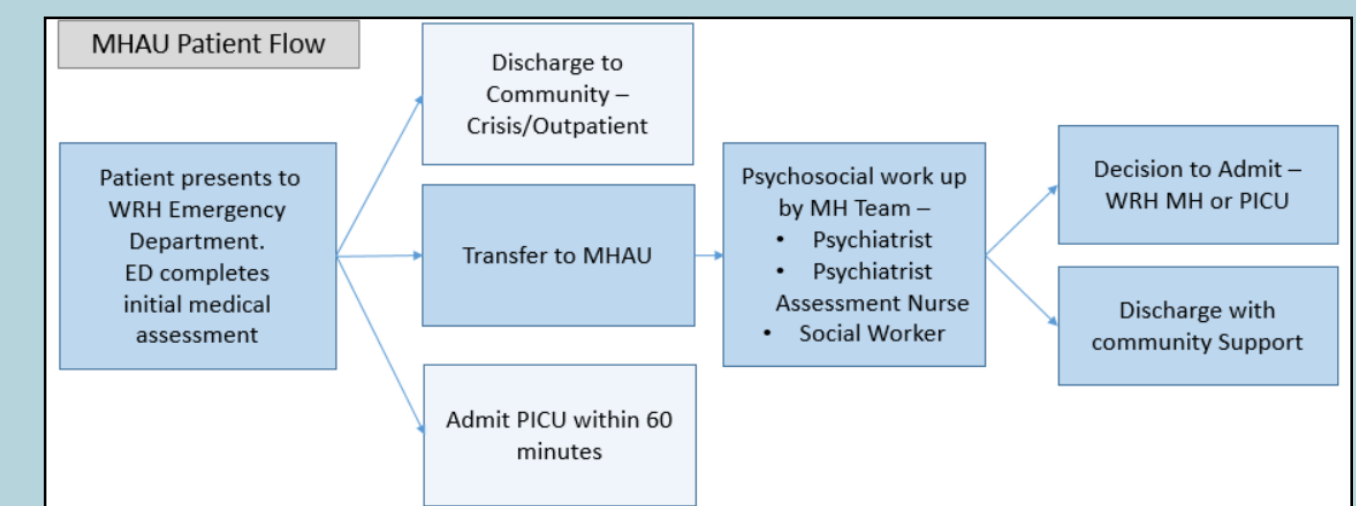
References:

1. Zeller, S. September 2017. EmPATH Units as a Solution for Emergency Department Psychiatric Patient Boarding. ResearchGate. 1 - 2. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329197331_EmPATH_Units_as_a_Solution_for_Emergency_Department_Psychiatric_Patient_Boarding
2. Lockwood, J. Oct 13, 2020. EMPATH UNITS: IMPROVING PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY CARE. EmPATH Units: Improving Psychiatric Emergency Care - BWBR

DISCUSSION:

In March 2021, WRH opened the new MHAU. Patients now follow the flow outlined in the image below. To optimize the MHAU model additional improvements were made to enhance the patient care experience. Including:

- 0700-2300 Psychiatric coverage in MHAU, on call in evening
- 24/7 SW coverage
- 24/7 Psychiatric Assessment Nurse coverage
- Enhanced patient assessment
- 24 hour callbacks by Social Workers for all patients
- Psychiatrist involvement in daily bed flow management



OUTCOME:

- Over 4,200 patients to date have received care in WRH MHAU. 90th percentile length of stay is approx. 12.2 hrs.
- 47% reduction in incidences of violence
- 96% reduction in patients leaving before receiving appropriate care
- 68% reduction in time to inpatient bed

