EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT POLICIES

SUBJECT: Triage of Psychiatric Emergency Patients

Original Date of Issue:

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<th>Reviewed:</th>
<th>12/89</th>
<th>11/93</th>
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Patient Population

- Neonate
- Pediatric ✓
- Adolescent ✓
- Adult ✓
- Geriatric ✓

POLICY: Patients presenting with psychiatric symptoms will be triaged accordingly.

IMPLEMENTATION:

1) Any patient with acute physical complaints or findings requiring prompt medical intervention shall be triaged to the appropriate Emergency Department division. The Triage Nurse must consult with the resident or Attending when it is unclear as to which service the patient should be triaged. In cases where the triage is still in question, the triage nurse will ask that the appropriate ED Attending consult further with the Psychiatric Attending (or Senior Resident if the Psychiatric Attending is not available).

2) The triage nurse shall initiate 1:1 and determine appropriate area of ED for assessment of patients with suicide attempts/ideation.

   Any patient who presents a risk to himself or others, expresses suicidal/self-injurious or homicidal/aggressive ideation, or who describes command auditory hallucinations shall be placed on a 1:1 patient observation at triage. Patients presenting with psychiatric symptoms indicating that they are or possibly are a danger to self or others and expressing a desire to leave are to be placed on a 1:1 patient observation immediately at triage and detained as necessary until evaluated by the Psychiatry Emergency Services staff and escorted to the appropriate treatment area. N.B. Mount Sinai employees who fail to safeguard a patient by maintaining or initiating 1:1 status will result in termination.

3) EVERY psychiatric patient must be endorsed by the Triage Nurse directly to the Psychiatric Clinical Nurse - Beeper number 2419. If the Psychiatric Clinical Nurse is not available, the Psychiatry resident (beeper 2455) or Attending should be notified of the patient’s triage.
4) Patients who have been triaged to the Psychiatric Emergency Room who are **not** on a patient watch may wait in the Psych ER waiting room.

5) All patients arriving by ambulance are to be triaged by the ambulance triage charge nurse in the AER or PER. Medically unstable patients should be sent to the medical or pediatric treatment area. Medically stable patients will go to Psychiatry.

6) Patients aged 13 years and above with only a psychiatric complaint can be triaged in the Pediatric ER and brought to Psych ER.