E-Poster

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The Walking Wounded: The Need for Regional Specialist Inpatient Rehabilitation Services in the South Trauma Network in Ireland

Topic: Infrastructure and Resources

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BACKGROUND

- Cork University Hospital (CUH) is the recently designated Major Trauma Centre (MTC) supporting the South Trauma Network in Ireland.
- The Inpatient Trauma Service (IPTS) is a consultant-led team of multidisciplinary healthcare professionals that coordinate the care of the trauma patients upon presentation to CUH and aims to expedite their journey to recovery.
- Ireland has one inpatient complex rehabilitation center, the National Rehabilitation Hospital (NRH) which has a bed capacity of 120.
- The South Trauma Network has no regional specialist post-acute rehabilitation facility.

To quantify and characterise trauma patients who initially presented to a major trauma center (MTC) and were referred to a Level 1 inpatient complex specialist rehabilitation (NRH). To assess rehab complexity score (RCSE) and examine if a portion of these patients could be served in a regional Level 2 specialist facility if such services existed.

METHODS

This is a retrospective observational cohort study from June 2023 to June 2025.

Inclusion criteria: Patients who were traumatically injured, admitted to the major trauma centre and reviewed by the inpatient trauma service (IPTS) in Cork University Hospital (CUH). Patients were included if they were deemed by the IPTS to require referral to the NRH, this is based on Rehab Needs Assessment. RCSE scores and medical records were examined in retrospect to assess if patients' rehabilitation needs could be met at a lower level facility.

RESULTS

Preliminary data from the 1st year (June 2023 - June 2024) 833 patients were reviewed by the IPTS in the first year. The average age of patients was 58.3 years, median age 61 year. 3.4% (n = 28) were referred to a Level 1 tertiary inpatient rehabilitation centre. The average age of patients referred to tertiary specialist rehabilitation (Level 1) was 45 years of age. 82% of patients (n = 23) referred tertiary specialist rehabilitation were under the age of 65. 39% of patients were discharged home, where there is little to no access to community specialist rehabilitation. RCSE scores indicate that this patient cohort could have received rehabilitation at a lower-level specialist facility or intensive specialist community rehabilitation.

CONCLUSION

Regional specialist rehabilitation services allow patients to receive essential rehabilitation near to their home, where they can be supported by their families. The IPTS has identified a significant proportion of trauma patients that could benefit from such services. There is an urgent need for development of regional specialist rehabilitation services.

Statement of Disclosures

None

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