


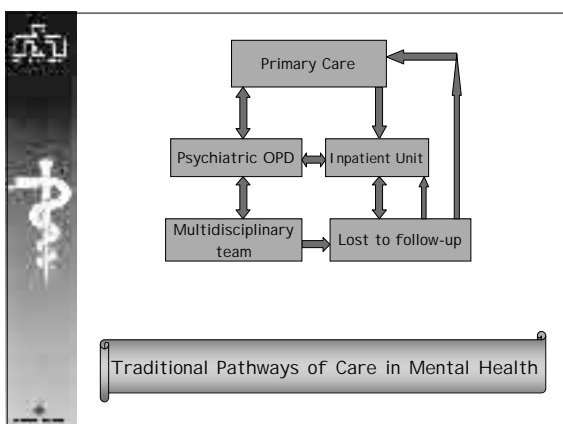

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY IN PRIMARY CARE

Presented by Dr. Lorcan Martin, Consultant Psychiatrist




Longford/Westmeath MHS - Athlone Sector

- Approx. pop. 30,000
- Inpt beds - St. Loman's Hospital
- Similar rates mental illness to national figures
- High rates substance misuse
- High rates social problems
- Multi-disciplinary community-based Mental Health Team





Problems Identified

- Increasing referral rates leading to lengthening waiting lists
- Reluctance to attend psychiatric clinic
- Practical difficulties attending clinic
- Difficulty accessing "expert" advice
- Patients not warranting clinic referral missing out on service




SOLUTION? TAKE THE SERVICE TO THE SERVICE USERS!




Why?

- Reduction of stigma
- Eases practical difficulties for service users
- Facilitates ease of transfer of information
- Patient sees it as extension of primary care
- Provides mental health care to those who do not warrant clinic referral/non-attendees
- Reduces clinic waiting lists
- In line with National Strategy




Psychiatry in Primary Care Pilot Project

- 2 surgeries involved - Athlone/Moate
- 1 Session alt. weeks - Cons./CPN
- 10 x 15 minute time slots
- GPs choose patients and allocate time slots
- Commenced August 2002 - 3 months



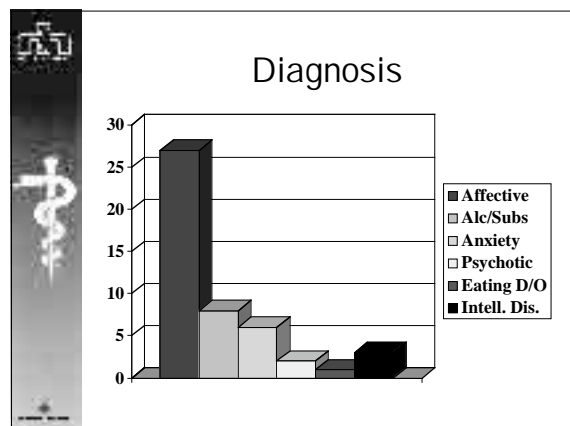

Patient Preference Survey

- 1 surgery only
- 45 completed survey forms
- 28 preferred assessment in Primary Care setting
- 9 preferred assessment in clinic
- 4 had no preference for setting




So what happened?

- 54 patients seen (44 first assessment, 10 review, 19 DNA)
- Of first assessments, 31 would have been referred to clinic, 13 would not have been referred & 0 had refused to attend (however 5/31 said they would not have attended the clinic)

Interventions

- 37 pharmacological
- 6 community mental health nurse
- 7 addiction counsellor
- 12 nurse therapist
- 2 psychiatric social worker
- 2 psychologist
- 2 employment officer
- 1 occupational therapist
- 7 advice only



Other information

- M:F = 15:29
- 21/44 had past psychiatric history
- 18/44 discharged by end of pilot
- 37/44 from within catchment area
- 27/44 on >1 psychotropic medication (7 on antidep. only, 2 on antipsychotic only)
- Mean no. of GP contacts within past year was 10 (range 1 - 50)



Other observations

- No referrals to clinic from practices involved
- 2 admissions prevented due to speedy assessment at primary care setting
- Satisfaction reported by both service users & GPs
- W/llist reduced from 6 to 2 weeks



What next?

- Full audit & evaluation of pilot
- Eventual incorporation as part of ongoing development of mental health service
- ? Expansion of service - resource implications