

# Patients Satisfaction about Emergency Services at Sharif Medical City Hospital, Lahore

Samina Khalid, Ashhad Munnaaf, Zarnab Ijaz, Ammara Javed, Amna Iqbal Butt, Qurat ul Ain, Laila Afzal, Muhammad Shahid Iqbal, Muhammad Anwar Sulehri

### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To determine the patients satisfaction about treatment and facilities provided at the Emergency Department of Sharif Medical City Hospital (SMCH), Lahore.

**Methodology:** It was a cross-sectional descriptive study in which 70 patients visiting Emergency Department of SMCH were interviewed. Data was collected through a questionnaire, which was analyzed by using SPSS 24.0.

**Results:** In our study, 81% patients were satisfied with the care provided to them in Emergency Department while 19% were not satisfied. About 76% patients were satisfied with their pain control while 24% respondents were unsatisfied. Out of 70 patients, 75% were provided privacy during their examination and 91% patients find their way easily to the Emergency Department. No significant association was observed between patient satisfaction about pain relief and gender of respondents.

**Conclusion:** The level of patient satisfaction regarding emergency services was high among both males and females. This minimizes the chances of increased mortality and morbidity.

**Keywords:** Emergency Department (ED). Sharif Medical City Hospital (SMCH). Patient satisfaction.

### INTRODUCTION

Patient satisfaction is one of the important indicators of emergency care quality and outcomes of healthcare services. Hospitals play a critical role in providing communities with essential medical care during all types of disaster. Depending on their scope and nature, disasters can lead to a rapidly increasing service demand that can overwhelm the functional capacity and safety of hospitals and the healthcare system at large.<sup>1</sup>

The World Health Organization has developed the hospital emergency response checklist to assist hospital administrators and emergency managers in responding effectively to the most likely disaster and emergency scenarios. Patient satisfaction has increasingly turned to one of the significant tools in the evaluation of hospital performance.

World Health Organization defines emergency services as the public organizations that respond to and deals with emergencies when they occur, especially the ambulance service, the police and the fire brigade. There is one death at 50 seconds all over the world and one injured in two seconds.<sup>2</sup>

The emergency department must provide initial treatment for a broad spectrum of illnesses and injuries,

some of which may be life-threatening and require immediate attention.<sup>3</sup> The emergency departments of hospitals operate 24 hours a day, although the number of staff members may vary in an attempt to reflect patient volume.<sup>4</sup>

Three types of care commonly provided by emergency departments; (1) Emergency Care: the treatment of seriously ill or injured patients who require immediate stabilizing treatment. (2) Unscheduled urgent care: care provided for acute problems or acute exacerbation of chronic problems. (3) Safety net care: care provided to vulnerable populations who experience barriers that prevent them from accessing care from other parts of the healthcare system.<sup>5</sup> Emergency department use reflects the health needs of the surrounding community.<sup>6</sup>

The most frequently assessed emergency services factors are perceived and actual waiting time, explanation/information on multiple aspects of process and treatment, staff attitudes, emergency department environment, perceived standards of technical care.<sup>7</sup> Patient factors that influence satisfaction are age, gender, social status, ethnicity and severity of illness. Patient satisfaction is the measure of quality in healthcare understood by patients and the result of different complicated factors.<sup>8</sup> Several factors should be coordinated with each other to make an appropriate condition for creation and development of patient satisfaction with observing patient's right completely in all aspects. Getting patient satisfaction is one of the principles of medical ethics and the physician should have consulted with patient in making any decision.<sup>9</sup>

Sharif Medical & Dental College, Sharif Medical City.  
Sharif Medical City Road, Off Raiwind Road, Jati Umra,  
Lahore 54000, Pakistan.

Correspondence: Dr. Muhammad Shahid Iqbal  
Professor Department of Community Medicine  
Sharif Medical & Dental College  
E-mail: shahid.iqbal@sharifmedicalcity.org

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## METHODOLOGY

It was a descriptive cross-sectional epidemiological study conducted at Emergency Department of Sharif Medical City Hospital, Lahore. After approval from ethical committee of the hospital, 70 patients were included in the study by non-probability sampling technique. All respondents were interviewed by using a semi-structured questionnaire.

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data was entered and analyzed by using SPSS version 24. Qualitative variables were analyzed by measuring frequency and percentage. Mean and the standard deviation were calculated for quantitative variables.

## RESULTS

The age of respondents ranged from 34-63years with a mean value of 42 years. Age of the patients and their

level of education are tabulated in Table1.

Our results show that 64 (91.4%) respondents found their way to Emergency Department easily while only 6 (8.6%) respondents had difficulty. Forty (57.1%) respondents waited for 5 min, 16 (22.9%) respondents waited for 10 min, 8 (11.4%) respondents waited for 20 min while 6 (8.6%) respondents waited for 30 min. Fifty three (75.7%) respondents found the waiting area comfortable while 17 (24.3%) respondents found waiting area uncomfortable. Fifty five (78.6%) respondents clarified about comprehensive informed consent while 15 (21.4%) respondents were not. Sixty four (91.4%) respondents history was taken properly while from 6 (8.6%) respondents history was not taken properly. Fifty three (75.7%) respondents were provided privacy during examination while 17 (24.3%) respondents were not given privacy.

Out of 70 respondents, 28 (40.0%) complained about

**Table 1: Sociodemographic characteristics of study population**

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage %
<b>Age (in years)</b>		
14-23	17	24.3
24-33	10	14.3
34-43	05	7.1
44-53	16	22.9
54-63	13	18.5
64-73	7	10
>73	2	2.9
<b>Education Status</b>		
Illiterate	30	42.9
Primary	3	4.3
Matric	17	24.3
Intermediate	9	12.9
Above intermediate	11	15.7
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	35	50.0
Female	35	50.0



the difference in staff's opinion while 42 (60%) respondents didn't complain. Thirty six (51.4%) respondents were examined after permission while 34 (48.6%) respondents were not asked for permission. Fifty seven (81.4%) respondents were provided with proper care at Emergency Department while 13 (18.6%) were not given proper care. Sixty two (88.6%) respondents were dealt with kindness and understanding while 8 (11.4%) respondents were not, 53 (75.7%) respondents were satisfied with pain control while 17 (24.3%) respondents were unsatisfied. According to the ER staff, 21 (30%) respondents were saying that ED was very clean, 42 (60%) respondents were saying it was fairly clean while 7 (10%) said it was not very clean. Thirty two (45.7%) respondents were complaining about noise while 38 (54.3%) were not and 35 (50.0%) respondents had access to food while 35 (50%) respondents had no access.

### DISCUSSION

The quality of emergency care is assessed by patients satisfaction. In this study, we found that mean age of the patients was 42 years. There was no gender variation in Emergency Department consultation which shows that both genders have equal consideration of their health problems. Comparable results were found in another study in which mean age of the patients was 38 years.<sup>3</sup> Another study conducted in Northwest Ethiopia showed that patient's satisfaction was not associated with age and gender of the patient.<sup>11</sup>

According to our results, most of the patients (81%) were satisfied with the care provided to them at Emergency Department which indicates the best emergency care management. Similar results were found in other studies.<sup>3,9</sup> Another study conducted about emergency care found that patient's satisfaction was good due to teamwork. At the time of emergency in hospital, patients are in dire need of both paramedical and medical staff attention. They were highly satisfied with the staff behavior and their kind attention.<sup>10</sup>

Most of the respondents (57%) got the consultation within 5 minutes and 20% waited for 20-30 minutes, as it is apparent that this delay in getting consultation may lead to harmful effects for patients which needs rectification. About 75% of the patients were comfortable with the waiting area facilities. A study conducted by Taye et al. showed that level of patient's satisfaction was very low due to delayed treatment of patients and discrimination towards patient care.<sup>11</sup>

The privacy during an examination is a fundamental human right for patients and it is encouraging that 76% respondents were provided privacy during examination but this should be improved so all patients should be provided such facility. In an emergency state when the patients face difference of staff opinion, it becomes

very distressing for them. About 40% of the respondents were facing difference of staff opinion. It is essential to have permission before the examination. About 49% of patients were not asked for permission for their examination which seems very awkward and these proper ethical issues should be addressed before the examination.

Different remedies for pain relief are available nowadays in Emergency Department. Approximately 76% of patients were satisfied with remedies for pain relief which were offered to them. About 24% respondents were not satisfied with the pain relief which may be either due to poor body response to painkiller or some other pre-existing problems. Comparable results were found in another study.<sup>9</sup>

A study was conducted in a tertiary care hospital in Brazil to assess the patient satisfaction regarding emergency services. Three hundred patients attending the Emergency Department were included in the study. There was a high degree of satisfaction of these subjects. About 261 (87%) patients were checked by the physician in time. Almost all the patients (296) were satisfied with the staff behavior, respect and their interest. About 73 % patients said that they were explained about their health status. Most of the patients (90.6%) were satisfied with the cleanliness of ER Department.<sup>8</sup>

Another study was done in Iran in which 500 patients attending the ER Department were enrolled. Most of the patients were satisfied with the communication of doctors with patients (82.5%) and paramedical staff behavior (78%). About 26.2% patients complained about the long waiting time and 22.2% patients were not satisfied with the cleanliness of ER department.<sup>9</sup>

### CONCLUSION

The level of patients satisfaction regarding emergency services was high among both males and females. This minimizes the chances of increased mortality and morbidity.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- The hospital administration should keep under review the staffing facilities, equipment and interdepartmental policies and ensure the provision of high quality emergency services.
- A regular feedback and evaluation system should be operational so that areas of improvement may be noted and corrected accordingly, best practices appreciated and implemented.
- Formal training programs for staff and public should be started to improve emergency healthcare services both at hospital and community level.



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