Gender Differences in CDC Guideline Compliance for STIs in Emergency Departments.

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Gender Differences in CDC Guideline Compliance for STIs in Emergency Departments

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Introduction

• According to the CDC, the rate of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is rising.\(^1\)
• STIs are a common reason for Emergency Department (ED) visits.\(^2\)
• Women who develop an STI of the upper genital tract are at increased risk for long-term sequelae including infertility and ectopic pregnancy.\(^3\)
• The need to recognize and adjust for sex and gender differences is a growing topic in medical research.\(^4\)
• One recent review found that only 18% of Emergency Medicine (EM)-related studies examined health outcome by gender, and that only 2% of studies included gender in the primary hypothesis.\(^5\)
• Because EDs experience 136 million patient visits annually, EM providers have the opportunity to be a leading source of gender-based research.\(^6\)

Problem Statement

• The objective of this project was to identify patient gender differences in physician compliance with 2010 CDC recommendations for the diagnosis and treatment of STIs in the ED.

Methodology

• A retrospective chart review identified patients treated for STIs in the EDs of three LVHN hospitals during a calendar year.
• Cases were reviewed to assess for compliance with 2010 CDC guidelines across 5 domains: history, physical exam, diagnostic testing, treatment, and discharge instructions.
• Abstractors were trained by the study principle investigator using explicit protocols of inclusion and exclusion.
• Descriptive statistics, student t-tests, chi-square tests, and logistic regression were used in the analysis.
• Statistical significance was set at \(p \leq 0.05\).
• Note: this was a secondary analysis of a prior study.\(^7\)

Results

• 247 participants were included, 159 (64.4%) were female.
• All 88 males presented with urethritis; 25.8% of females presented with cervicitis, and 74.2% with PID.
• Physician compliance for the five CDC criteria ranged from 68.8% for patient history to 93.5% for patient diagnostic testing.
• 54.1% of female charts had histories consistent with CDC criteria compared to 95.5% for male charts, \(OR=16.9; 95\% CI: 5.9-48.4\), \(p<0.001\).
• 51.6% of female charts had fully-documented delivery of discharge instructions compared to 97.7% of male charts \(OR=42.3; 95\% CI: 10.0-178.6\), \(p<0.001\).
• No significant sex differences in documentation were observed for physical exam or treatment.

Conclusions and Future Implications

• This study found patient gender differences in documentation compliance with CDC guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of STIs.
• By publishing these findings, we aim to raise awareness of gender differences so that providers are ensuring values-based, patient-centered care for their patients.
• This project also explores the SELECT competency of health systems by highlighting and analyzing other published gender differences, both in the U.S. and internationally.
• Further studies are required to determine the causes of these differences and how to alleviate them.

References:


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