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AN AUDIT TO IDENTIFY FACTORS AFFECTING RESPONSE TO TREATMENT AMONG DEPRESSED PATIENTS WHO HAVE DOCUMENTED SUICIDAL IDEATION/ATTEMPTS IN A BEDFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH TEAM

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Introduction: In recent years there has been a move towards treating depressed patients in the community. One factor that may reduce the likelihood of discharge from secondary care is suicidality. The aim of this audit was to identify factors associated with continued suicidality among Community patients.

Subjects and methods: We searched an anonymised database of patients and identified all those with previously documented suicidal thoughts or attempts. We also noted the presence of factors such as alcohol problems, drug problems, augmentation therapy and 'other risk' factors (e.g. financial problems or homelessness). We assessed the latest clinic letter, to see if patients were still reporting suicidality. We compared the aforementioned factors between the group of patients in which suicidality was still present (group N) and the group of patients in which suicidality was no longer a feature (group Y).

Results: Of the 56 patients with suicidal thoughts or attempts there were 44 in group N (79%) and 12 in group Y (21%). Alcohol problems, drug problems and 'other' risk factors were more common among group Y than group N. Conversely, the percentage of patients on augmentation therapy was greater in group N than group Y.

Discussion: The audit provides an insight into the factors that might influence outcomes among depressed patients.

Conclusions: Although the results are suggestive, it is difficult to make firm conclusions about patient outcomes on the present data. The audit provides a useful starting point, especially in considering the treatment of patients within the CMHT.