

The Profile of Absconding Psychiatric Inpatients in a Psychiatric Hospital in Central of Taiwan

Mei-Ling Lin, PhD

Nursing Department, Tsaotun Psychiatric Center of Ministry of Health and Welfare in Taiwan, Taichung, Taiwan

Aims and objectives. Absconding, where patients under an involuntary mental health order leave hospital without permission that may result in patient harm and professional emotion impact for nursing staff. The purpose of this study was to describe the characteristics of the absconding patient and these events in acute and rehabilitation wards of a psychiatric hospital in Taiwan from January 2012 to November 2017.

Background. Absconding is an important issue in psychiatric inpatient units. That may risks that include patient harm and professional anxiety. In spite of this, limited research has been conducted in Taiwan on patients who abscond while receiving psychiatric care.

Design. This study was conducted retrospective study.

Method. Absconding events was analysis from six acute and twenty rehabilitation wards from January 2012 to November 2017 in a psychiatric hospital in Central Taiwan.

Results. Over the 6.9 years period, 117 times were absconded a total of 5414 patients of a psychiatric hospital in Taiwan. The absconding rate was 0.31 incidents per 100 voluntary admissions. Being male, middle-aged, diagnosed with schizophrenia having a longer hospital stay were predictive of absconding. Psychiatric patients absconded average 44.4 ± 13.06 years old. Over 55% of absconding patients were multiple times admission. 76% were male patients. Gender was significantly associated with absconding. There are 6.8% patients absconded more than once time. Age and diagnosis emerged as particularly important factors to consider.

Discussion. The present study provides a comprehensive psychiatric center picture of absconding. The characteristics of patients and incidents provide useful risk assessment information for nurses. Nurses should be pay attention to patients' risk factors of admission patients. Nurse is a key role in prevention absconding that factors have led to absconding reductions in the wards. Such interventions provide a complex consideration to prevent in inpatient hospitalization to inform nursing management plans. There also appears to be a link between continuing detention orders and an absconding event.

Conclusions. Findings provide the profile of absconding patients in Taiwan. Exploration of the related factor why patients abscond and why many do so repeatedly warrants further investigation.

Relevance to clinical practice. Risk factor management approaches taking into account associated with absconding could be trial to reduce the incidence of absconding in psychiatric inpatient settings.

Title:

The Profile of Absconding Psychiatric Inpatients in a Psychiatric Hospital in Central of Taiwan

Keywords:

absconding, Taiwan and psychiatric inpatients

References:

- Ashmore, R. (2008). Nurses' accounts of locked ward doors: Ghosts of the asylum or acute care in the 21st century? *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 15(3), 175-185. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2850.2007.01184.x
- Bowers, L., Jeffery, D., Simpson, A., Daly, C., Warren, J., & Nijman, H. (2007). Junior staffing changes and the temporal ecology of adverse incidents in acute psychiatric wards. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 57(2), 153-160. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2648.2006.04101.x
- Brimblecombe, N., Tingle, A., & Murrells, T. (2007). How mental health nursing can best improve service users' experiences and outcomes in inpatient settings: Responses to a national consultation. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 14(5), 503-509. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2850.2007.01119.x
- Brumbles, D., & Meister, A. (2013). Psychiatric elopement: using evidence to examine causative factors and preventative measures. *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing*, 27(1), 3-9. doi: 10.1016/j.apnu.2012.07.002
- Gerace, A., Oster, C., Mosel, K., O'Kane, D., Ash, D., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2015). Five-year review of absconding in three acute psychiatric inpatient wards in Australia. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 24(1), 28-37. doi: 10.1111/inm.12100
- Meyer, G. G., Maritin, J. B., & Lange, P. (1967). Elopement from the open psychiatric unit: A two-year study. *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 144(4), 297-304.
- Mezey, G., Durkin, C., Dodge, L., & White, S. (2015). Never ever? Characteristics, outcomes and motivations of patients who abscond or escape: A 5-year review of escapes and absconds from two medium and low secure forensic units. *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, 25(5), 440-450. doi: 10.1002/cbm.1982
- Muir-Cochrane, E., & Mosel, K. A. (2008). Absconding: A review of the literature 1996-2008. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 17(5), 370-378. doi: 10.1111/j.1447-0349.2008.00562.x
- Muir-Cochrane, E., Mosel, K., Gerace, A., Esterman, A., & Bowers, L. (2011). The profile of absconding psychiatric inpatients in Australia. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 20(5-6), 706-713. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2702.2010.03553.x
- Stewart, D., & Bowers, L. (2011). Absconding and locking ward doors: Evidence from the literature. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 18(1), 89-93. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2850.2010.01622.x
- Yasini, M., Sedaghat, M., Ghasemi Esfe, A. R., & Tehranidoost, M. (2009). Epidemiology of absconding from an Iranian psychiatric centre. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 16(2), 153-157. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2850.2008.01350.x

Abstract Summary:

Absconding, where patients under an involuntary mental health order leave hospital without permission that may result in patient harm and professional emotion impact for nursing staff. This study was

described the characteristics of the absconding patient in a psychiatric hospital in Taiwan from January 2012 to November 2017.

Content Outline:

Aims and objectives. Absconding, where patients under an involuntary mental health order leave hospital without permission that may result in patient harm and professional emotion impact for nursing staff. The purpose of this study was to describe the characteristics of the absconding patient and these events in acute and rehabilitation wards of a psychiatric hospital in Taiwan from January 2012 to November 2017.

Background. Absconding is an important issue in psychiatric inpatient units. That may risks that include patient harm and professional anxiety. In spite of this, limited research has been conducted in Taiwan on patients who abscond while receiving psychiatric care.

Design. This study was conducted retrospective study.

Method. Absconding events was analysis from six acute and twenty rehabilitation wards from January 2012 to November 2017 in a psychiatric hospital in Central Taiwan.

Results. Over the 6.9 years period, 117 times were absconded a total of 5414 patients of a psychiatric hospital in Taiwan. The absconding rate was 0.31 incidents per 100 voluntary admissions. Being male, middle-aged, diagnosed with schizophrenia having a longer hospital stay were predictive of absconding. Psychiatric patients absconded average 44.4 ± 13.06 years old. Over 55% of absconding patients were multiple times admission. 76% were male patients. Gender was significantly associated with absconding. There are 6.8% patients absconded more than once time. Age and diagnosis emerged as particularly important factors to consider.

Discussion. The present study provides a comprehensive psychiatric center picture of absconding. The characteristics of patients and incidents provide useful risk assessment information for nurses. Nurses should be pay attention to patients' risk factors of admission patients. Nurse is a key role in prevention absconding that factors have led to absconding reductions in the wards. Such interventions provide a complex consideration to prevent in inpatient hospitalization to inform nursing management plans. There also appears to be a link between continuing detention orders and an absconding event.

Conclusions. Findings provide the profile of absconding patients in Taiwan. Exploration of the related factor why patients abscond and why many do so repeatedly warrants further investigation.

Relevance to clinical practice. Risk factor management approaches taking into account associated with absconding could be trial to reduce the incidence of absconding in psychiatric inpatient settings.

First Primary Presenting Author

Primary Presenting Author

Mei-Ling Lin, PhD

Tsaotun Psychiatric Center of Ministry of Health and Welfare in Taiwan
Nursing Department

Head Nurse
Nantun Dist.
Taichung
Taiwan

Professional Experience: Mei-Ling Lin has completed her PhD at the age of 43 years from institute of allied health sciences of Medicine College of National Cheng Kung University in Taiwan. She is a psychiatric head nurse in Tsaotun Psychiatric Center of Ministry of Health and Welfare in Taiwan.

Author Summary: Mei-Ling Lin has completed her PhD at the age of 43 years from institute of allied health sciences of Medicine College of National Cheng Kung University in Taiwan. She is a psychiatric head nurse in Tsaotun Psychiatric Center of Ministry of Health and Welfare in Taiwan and Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Nursing, Hung Kuang University. Her research interests in psychiatric nursing and clinical ethics issues.