

## **MEDICAL EVALUATION OF PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS**

Patients present to emergency departments on a regular basis in various states of psychological crisis disorders. Caring for these patients can be challenging, but they deserve the same timely and compassionate care that all patients receive. Expert emergency nursing care for these patients will help assure appropriate medical care while maintaining a safe patient care environment.

It is the position of the Emergency Nurses Association that:

1. All patients should be treated with respect, dignity, care and compassion in a non-judgmental manner.
2. All patients should have a screening assessment for alcohol, drugs, and mental health issues to determine the presence of risk factors.
3. All patients deserve appropriate, timely, and quality care for any medical, psychiatric, or addictive event.
4. Every patient presenting with psychiatric behaviors should receive a medical evaluation to assure that no acute medical intervention is necessary.
5. Emergency nurses have a responsibility to provide patient education regarding available resources for psychiatric and addictive services.
6. Collaboration between emergency nurses, physicians, hospital administration, security, and psychiatric/addiction services will work towards ensuring patient, staff, and visitor safety.
7. Education in crisis prevention, intervention, de-escalation, and management of the patient in seclusion or restraints is critical for emergency nurses to provide optimum care.

### **Resources**

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