Uncovering alcohol related presentations to an inner-city Emergency Department – the WA Model for Violence Prevention Pilot

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Introduction: Alcohol-related presentations (ARPs) to Emergency Departments (EDs) place a significant burden on frontline services and the wider community. The Mental Health Commission (Commission) has partnered with East Metropolitan Health Service (EMHS) to develop and pilot the Western Australian Model for Violence Prevention (WA MVP) pilot at Royal Perth Hospital (RPH) ED. The pilot aims to utilise the research to inform interventions that reduce alcohol-related harm, violence and aggression toward frontline staff and improve community safety.

Method: This quantitative pilot study identifies ARPs among patients aged ≥16 years attending RPH ED. ARPs were identified using a brief survey administered at triage. Where patients were unable to respond at triage, clinical tracking systems and medical records were used to identify ARPs. De-identified, aggregated data is shared with key stakeholders including the Commission, the Western Australia Police Force, St John Ambulance, lived experience representatives and EMHS Population Health. This data informs collaborative interpretation and intervention design.

Results: Between October 2023 and December 2025 there were >14,000 ARPs to RPH ED, accounting for 10% of all ED presentations. Analyses examined ARP demographics, reasons for presentation, injury and assault involvement, and patterns of attendance. Aggregated data captures source of alcohol and incident location. Overall, 18% of ARPs did not wait to be seen, 18% are experiencing homelessness, 33% of ARP present frequently (more than once per calendar month).

Discussions: Incorporation of lived experience was critical in contextualising quantitative findings and highlighting the complex needs of ARPs particularly people experiencing homelessness, frequent presenters, Aboriginal people, and those transferred from rural regions.

Conclusion: These insights have informed WA MVP stakeholders and community partners. Findings are guiding the development and implementation of pilot interventions aimed at reducing alcohol-related harm and supporting appropriate diversion to community services.

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