

## Overcrowding In Emergency Department

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Dear editor;

Emergency department (ED) crowding is a health management problem that continues to increase all over the world as the years progress. ED crowding has become a common problem of all countries and hospitals. There are hospital management, country health management, hospital and social reasons for the ED crowd. The prevalence of the ED crowd and the continuous increase in its degree have resulted in studies on its causes and solutions. All health institutions are trying to develop solution methods to cope with this intensity. There are many solutions for AS crowding, both in Emergency Medicine associations and federations, and in the literature. Since ED crowding is a problem for all hospitals, suggestions suitable for the institution should be presented and implemented by ED managers and physicians in particular. In order to prevent ED crowding, the first thing to do is to learn the underlying cause or causes. After these reasons are found, the emergency room crowd can be prevented by suggesting solutions (2).

In a review by Mason et al., a total of 233 publications related to ED crowding were examined and it was determined that the most important factor causing ED crowding was hospitalization block and solutions for hospitalization block were suggested (3). It has been determined that the number of hospitalized patients and the longest waiting period decreased by increasing hospital resources, especially by increasing the number of doctors and nurses (4). They stated that increasing the hospital bed capacity reduces the number of patients waiting for hospitalization in the ED and the waiting time of the patient who has been hospitalized for the

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longest time. It was found that increasing the bed capacity in ED had no effect on the waiting times of the patients (4).

Emergency Medicine specialization training is given in training and research hospitals and university hospitals, and Emergency Medicine specialists who will work in the EDs in our country complete their specialization training in these institutions. Bedside training, which is considered an important part of education due to the density in universities and especially in training and research hospitals in Turkey, is also inadequate and causes the disruption of specialty training (5).

AS crowding also increases waiting times in triage. Non-emergency patients, which is one of the most important elements of the number of applications, also have longer waiting times than expected (6). As these periods get longer, patients waiting for examination leave their EDs without waiting for examination (7).

As the ED crowd increases, it causes problems related to both the emergency medical services team and the patients who come with the emergency medical services. It is not appropriate to accept patients arriving by ambulance in an ED that has reached full capacity. As the crowd increases, the transport time of patients arriving by ambulance to the hospital increases as there are not enough stretchers and suitable physicians (8). However, when the density is high and all the beds in the ED are full, it causes the transport times to be prolonged due to the ambulance being diverted to another hospital and even increases the accident risk of ambulances. Increasing ED crowding may also cause many patients to leave without being examined and thus reduce hospital income (9).

Due to the pandemic, the number of emergency service applications has varied. Hospital admissions decreased in the early part of the pandemic. However, the patient density in the emergency departments has increased again because non-emergency clinics do not accept patients, especially during peak periods (10).

As a result, with the increase in the ED crowd, the satisfaction of the ED employees decreases and it leads to burnout in the ED health workers. At the same time, the waiting time of patients for examination increases, the quality of health care provided to patients decreases, which reduces patient satisfaction. In addition, as the crowd increases, there are delays in the medical treatment of patients. ED crowding is one of the main causes of many negative outcomes, especially the increase in mortality and the emergence of legal consequences.

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