

An Island in Crisis: The Relationship Between Community Disasters and Admissions into a Psychiatric Ward

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ABSTRACT

As one of the risk factors surrounding the onset of mental illness, psychological stress can increase especially during a community crisis. Community resources are restricted, social relationships are strained, and with the decreased stability in financial security that often succeeds a disaster, many people have an increased risk of developing certain mental illnesses. Furthermore, for those already suffering from a mental illness, a community disaster can exacerbate and make the illness harder to cope with.

As such, this study aims to investigate the potential correlation between the number of admissions into the Commonwealth Healthcare Psychiatric Ward and time periods of significant community crisis on Saipan (the years 2015, 2018, and 2020 correlating to the disasters Super Typhoon Soudelor, Yutu, and the Covid Pandemic respectively). Gathering information from the paper and digital records in the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation, we will focus on patient population data such as age, sex, admission status, and diagnosis when admitted to determine a relationship between times of community crisis and the population admitted into a psychiatric ward.

The results of this study may help predict whether a person will be admitted into a psychiatric ward, when a community should advocate for resources regarding mental health to minimize such admissions, and which demographics are especially susceptible to developing a mental illness following a community crisis.

KEY WORDS: Patient Population Data, Psychiatric Ward, Community Disaster, Crisis, Risk Factor, Mental Illness

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