

Practice Management Guideline for PTSD Screening in Admitted Adults using the NSESSS Screening Tool

Introduction:

This practice management guideline aims to provide a standardized approach for screening admitted adults for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) using the NeuroScreening for Emotional, Sensation, and Sexual Symptoms (NSESSS) screening tool. As a Level I Trauma Center, early identification of PTSD is crucial for timely intervention and improving patient outcomes. This guideline will ensure that healthcare providers follow a systematic and evidence-based approach to identify PTSD symptoms in admitted adults.

Purpose and Scope:

The purpose of this guideline is to facilitate the early detection and appropriate management of PTSD symptoms among admitted adults.

Inclusion Criteria:

The scope of this guideline includes adult patients (15 years and above) admitted as a result of any act of violence (assault, gunshot, or stabbing) or with a resulting life changing injury for any mechanism of action that includes a traumatic amputation excluding digits or a spinal cord injury resulting in paralysis, and who are able to participate in the screening based on neurologic status.

NSESSS Screening Tool Overview:

The NSESSS screening tool is a validated instrument designed to assess emotional, sensory, and sexual symptoms associated with PTSD. It consists of a comprehensive set of questions and rating scales to identify PTSD symptoms in adults.

Screening Process:

1. **Timing:** The screening for PTSD using the NSESSS tool should be conducted within 48 hours of admission for all adult patients meeting inclusion criteria by our advocacy program.
2. **Personnel:** Trained healthcare providers, such as our trauma advocates or social workers, should administer the screening tool.

3. Informed Care: Obtain the patients acceptance or refusal prior to performing the NSESSS screening tool. Explaining the purpose of the screening and ensure patient confidentiality.

4. Screening Tool Administration: Administer the NSESSS screening tool to the admitted adult patients. Record their responses in the EMR under a general note for PTSD Screening.

Interpretation of NSESSS Screening Results:

1. Scoring: Calculate the total score based on the responses obtained from the NSESSS screening tool. The screening tool's manual should be referenced for scoring guidelines.
2. Cutoff Scores: Determine the cutoff scores for identifying individuals at risk of PTSD, as per the NSESSS screening tool's validation studies.
3. Positive Screen: If an admitted adult patient scores above the cutoff point, consider it a positive screen for possible PTSD symptoms.

Follow-up and Referral:

1. Consultation: Consult with social work or a mental health specialist if a patient screens positive for possible PTSD symptoms.
2. Further Assessment: For patients with positive screens, a psychiatry consult may be conducted for a more comprehensive assessment of PTSD symptoms, including severity, duration, and impairment levels.
3. Treatment and Support: Social Workers may offer psychoeducation, community resources and support to patients and their families who have screened positive. Implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), or pharmacotherapy, can also be utilized if deemed appropriate after a psychiatry consultation.

Documentation:

1. Record Keeping: Document the results of the NSESSS screening, including scores and any follow-up actions, in the patient's medical record.
2. Reporting: Report aggregated data related to PTSD screening results monthly for quality improvement purposes.