

E05

## Caregiver presence during inpatient hospitalization in the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Department in Iceland

IS: Áhrif viðveru forsjáraðila í innlögn unglunga á legudeild Barna- og unglिंगageðdeildar Landspítala

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**Introduction:** In 2020, a policy was implemented to require caregivers to be present with their children during hospitalization in the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Department Inpatient Unit. The aim of this study is to assess the effects of caregiver presence during hospitalization on rate of hospitalization, length of stay and rehospitalization, as well as the clinical experience.

**Method:** A mixed methods study with focus groups and descriptive statistics. Focus group to assess the clinical value and concerns of caregiver presence. Hospitalizations data is gathered and presented to assess effects on rate, length of stay and rate of rehospitalization.

**Results:** The presence of a caregiver provides an opportunity for ongoing therapeutic conversations, additional opportunities to observe child and caregiver interactions and situational guidance, in addition to care as usual. Moreover, the presence of a caregiver as a source of support and comfort for the child while hospitalized is of great importance for the family bond and decreases the likelihood of hospital staff becoming the primary source of security. Some of the challenges encountered were the conflicting demands on the caregiver's time and caregivers interfering with other patients. There was not a notable decrease in rate of hospitalization, length of stay nor rate of rehospitalization.

**Conclusions:** Results suggest that the requirement of caregiver presence during hospitalization provided valuable treatment information and opportunities. Descriptive data is inconclusive due to an overall increase in mental health issues post COVID 19.