

# The Impact of COVID-19 on Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Inpatient Admissions

Leah Reece, M.A., Deanna Sams, Ph.D.

## INTRODUCTION

- COVID-19 has had drastic implications and led to significant modifications in children's daily routines (Lee, 2020; Liu et al., 2020; Singh et al., 2020)
- 80% of adolescents with pre-existing mental health conditions reported COVID-19 worsened their symptoms (Thomas, 2020)
- Adolescents presenting for emergency psychiatric admissions decreased from admission rates in previous years during pandemic, but there was an increase in proportion of those admitted to inpatient unit during the pandemic (Ferrando et al., 2020; Leeb et al., 2020)
- Purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which stressors related to COVID-19 and subsequent quarantine/isolation were contributors to psychiatric crises that led to admissions to Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Inpatient Unit (CAPIU)
- The aim is to better understand the unprecedented mental health impact of a global pandemic and to assist mental health service leaders to better plan for patient flow should there be another wave of quarantine/isolation

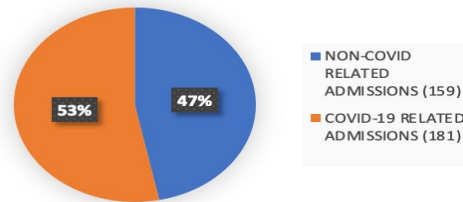
## METHODS

- Electronic medical records (March - January 1, 2021) of adolescents (12-18) admitted to CAPIU were reviewed using the keywords related to COVID-19 to assess whether factors related to pandemic were involved in psychiatric crisis that led to admission
- 340 admission and discharge notes were reviewed

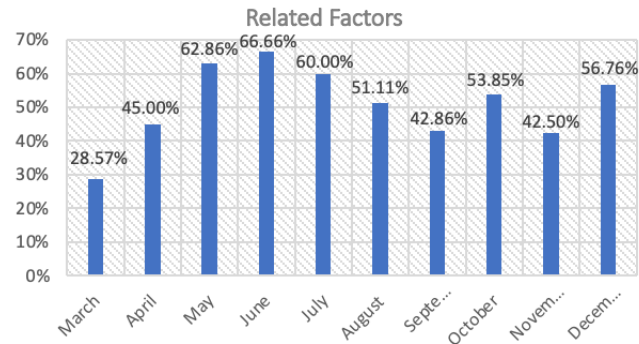
## RESULTS

- Of the 340 admissions, 181 were preceded by psychiatric crises related to COVID-19 (53.24%)
- COVID-19 related admissions were more prevalent during the summer months (May-July)
- The majority those admitted for COVID-19 related factors were Caucasian (n=127, 70.17%) and identified as female (n=113, 62.43%)
- The average patient age was 15 years old

### Total Admissions (340)



### Percentage of Admissions due to COVID-19



## DISCUSSION

- Findings underscore the significant psychological impact of COVID-19 related stressors
- Pattern of admissions may be related to the positive-rates in NY, summer activities being cancelled, and being in close quarters with family members
- Overall lower admission rates during the period data was collected was likely a result of initial fear of infection in the emergency department
- Proactively mitigating pandemic-related psychosocial stressors is important
- Information should be widely disseminated that includes parental tips for talking about global pandemic with children, strategies for coping with changes and uncertainties, and strategies for navigating remote learning, daily life, social distancing, and children's mental health needs
- Crisis intervention services should be widely available and psychological services should continue via Telehealth
- True psychosocial impacts of COVID-19 and long-term effects are still unknown and should continue to be assessed
- Important to assess why utilization of psychiatric emergency services decreased during the COVID-19 period despite increase in mental health needs

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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