**CRAZY STRESSED ASIANS: TRENDS IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS OF THE ASIAN-AMERICAN POPULATION FOR PSYCHIATRIC COMPLAINTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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**BACKGROUND:** As many outpatient services became unavailable during the pandemic, many providers shifted to telemedicine as a means of connecting with patients. However, telemedicine was not readily accessible for to everyone, especially patients who used the Emergency Department (ED) as their primary resource for health care and psychiatric services. The pandemic has also been linked to a rise in discrimination against Asian-Americans, which undoubtedly negatively impacts mental health.

**METHODS:** We conducted a single-center, retrospective chart review of Loyola University Medical Center ED visits between March 1st-April 30th, 2019 and March 1st-April 30th, 2020 to identify trends in the demographics of patients who presented to the ED for psychiatric complaints.

**RESULTS:** A total of 598 patient charts were reviewed (n=264 in 2019; n=334 in 2020). Homeless patients were more likely to present for a psychiatric complaint in 2020 (23% vs. 11%, p<0.001), reported greater incidence of illicit drug use (50% vs. 41%, p<0.024), and reported a history of alcohol abuse (41% vs 39%, p<0.2). Interestingly, more patients had a previous psychiatric diagnosis in 2019 than in 2020 (76% vs. 63%, p<0.001) and were also less likely to be diagnosed with a new psychiatric disease (32% vs. 12%, p<0.001). As for demographics, un-housed African-Americans and Hispanics/Latinxs were more likely to present to the ED in both years.  Only a total of 7 Asian-Americans presented to the ED for a psychiatric complaint (n=4 in 2019, n=3 in 2020). They were all housed with no history of illicit drug or alcohol usage.  These findings may have been skewed by the fact that the Loyola ED is located in Maywood, which is a predominantly African-American and Hispanic community.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Overall, we found that Asian-Americans are under-represented among people experiencing homelessness and are less likely to present to the ED with a psychiatric complaint. However, we found that African-Americans and Hispanics/Latinxs have a significantly higher association with homelessness, psychiatric diagnosis, illicit drug and chronic alcohol use. This suggests the importance of increased access to consistent psychiatric care and follow up with individuals affected by socioeconomic health disparities.

**CONTENT CATEGORY:** Epidemiology, Clinical Science, Patient Care

**KEYWORDS:** COVID-19, Emergency Department, Psychiatry, Asian-American, Homeless