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COLLABORATION BETWEEN GENERAL PRACTICE AND COMMUNITY PSYCHIATRIC SERVICE, EVALUATION OF CONSULTATION-LIAISON MODEL

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Background: There are many advantages to improve communication between primary care and Psychiatric services. In Ireland various models of liaison with primary care are still in early stages of experimentation in some parts. We devised a pilot project of consultation-liaison model in west of Ireland.

Methodology: There are 11 general practitioners working in the catchment area. All of them were given information and five agreed to participate. Based on random allocation two general practitioners were placed in experimental group. Three other general practitioners were allocated to control group. All patients from these surgeries were enrolled in study. In experimental group face to face meetings between psychiatrist and general practitioners were arranged before and after seeing patients in clinics. Feedback and exchange of information took place during these meetings. Meetings were arranged on monthly basis for six month starting in December 2009. While in the control group communication and referral was through usual method of writing letters.

Results: Assessment of data was based on comparison of outcome in two sets of patients and surgeries. We collected data regarding number of admissions, compliance with appointments, changes in medications, number of referrals to secondary care, number of discharges back to general practitioners. Results show quantitative benefits of collaborative model in the lines of more patients being discharged back to GP and less missed appointments. There was also trend of reduced admission rate but this was statistically not significant.