

## Knowledge and attitude of visitor on triage system in emergency room at Patan hospital, Nepal

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Emergency triage is the process by which patient is classified according to the type and urgency of their conditions to get the right patient to the right place at the right time with the right care provider. It is important that patient and visitor knows about the triage. This study is conducted to analyse knowledge and attitude of visitor on triage system.

**Method:** It is a cross-sectional descriptive study carried out in Patan Hospital Emergency Department on 2016 July 1<sup>st</sup> to 2016 September 15. Patients were interviewed with self-structured questionnaire.

**Result:** Total 384 participants completed the self-structured knowledge and attitude questions and descriptive analysis done using SPSS-17. 280(73%) participants thought that triaging every patient entering emergency room is important. 262(69.50%) participants answered that the purpose of triage is for efficient identifying sick patient and prompt management.

**Conclusion:** The knowledge and attitude of the visitor about triage is fairly good contrary to assumption.

**Keywords:** attitude, knowledge, triage

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## INTRODUCTION

Triage is the process by which patients are prioritized according to the type and urgency of their conditions to get the right treatment in the right place at the right time with the right care provider.<sup>1</sup> An effective triage system aims to ensure that emergency department patients “receive appropriate attention, in a suitable location, with the requisite degree of urgency”.<sup>1,2</sup> Triage ensures that emergency care is initiated in response to clinical need rather than order of arrival. Triage aims to promote the safety of patient by ensuring that timing of care and resource allocation is proportionate to the degree of illness or injury. Triage is the point at which emergency care begins.<sup>3</sup>

It is clear from the evidences that triage is crucial to the management of right person at right place and right time. However, this requires triaging system to be implemented and followed by both patient and health care workers. On arrival to emergency, patient and their attendant are worried and have many concerns. In this situation, a good understanding by the patient and relatives is essential so that they wait for their turn while priority is given to sick patient. So, the fair knowledge of triaging system by the patients and their attendant is very crucial for efficient triaging the ED. With this background, this study is designed to explore the knowledge and attitude of patient and their visitor in regards to triage.

## METHOD

It is a cross-sectional descriptive study carried out in Patan Hospital Emergency Department from

2016 July 1<sup>st</sup> to 2016 September 15. We did not find any study looking into knowledge and attitude of visitors in google scholar search, so we hypothesized prevalence of good knowledge and attitude in 50% of the patient. Taking this prevalence, sample size calculated was 384. Stratified random sampling was carried out by dividing participants into three strata viz. morning, evening and night shifts. From this stratum, 30% of sample was taken from morning and night shift each, remaining 40% sample was taken from evening shift. Forty percent was taken from the evening shift as patient load is more during this shift. Consent was taken for the study, visitors not giving consent, anxious and worried visitors were excluded from the study. Structured questionnaire was developed and content and face validation was done from the expert team and piloting 15 participants. The collected data was analyzed using excel sheet and SPSS 17.0.

## RESULTS

Out of 384 participants male were 233 (60.68%) and female-151 (39.32%). To assess the knowledge visitors were asked how many color codes are used in triage, to which 295(76.82%) gave correct response. They were also asked about the purpose of the triage, 59(15.36%) of them said that triage is done for the benefit of hospital, 264(68.75%) said that it is done for efficient identifying of sick patient and prompt management, 55(14.32%) said that it is done for delaying treatment process and 6(1.56%) said that the did not know.

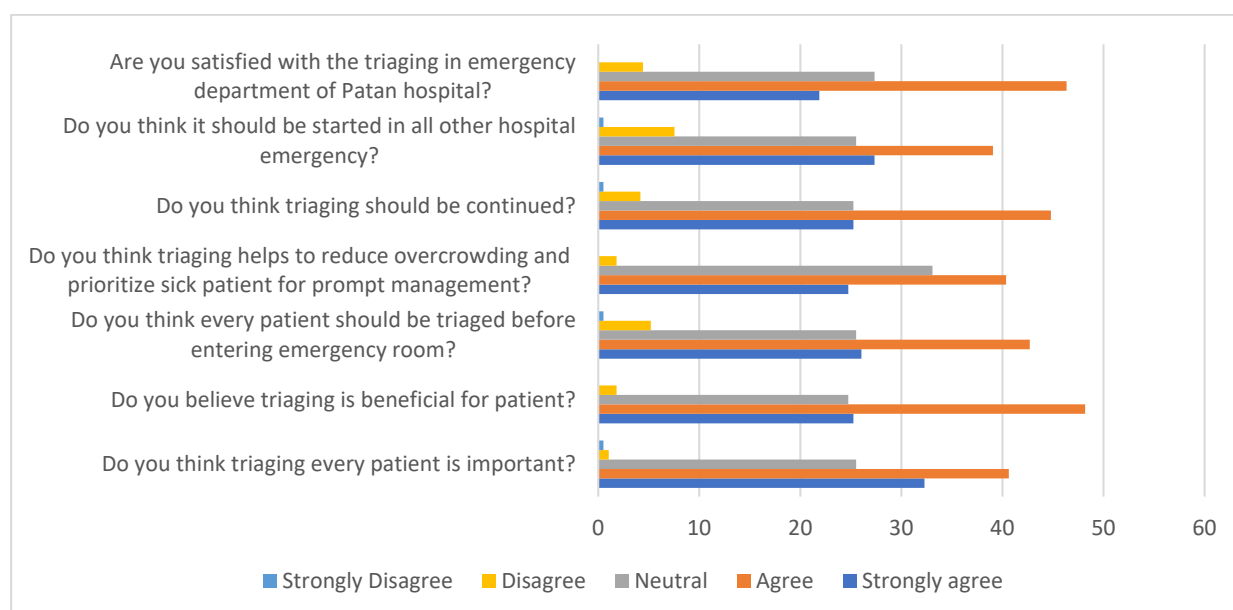


Figure 1. Attitude of visitors towards triage (values in percentage)

## DISCUSSION

The study showed that there is fairly good knowledge about triage process which is carried out in every patient in Patan hospital before entering in emergency room. About 77% participants knew about the different color codes used while triaging. Out of all, 264(69%) participants knew about the purpose of triage carried out to every patient before entering the emergency room. Contrary to my assumption that knowledge and attitude of triage is low, it came to be fairly good probably due to limitations. In recent study by Adeniji AA et al(2016), a semi-structured qualitative interview was conducted in either Xhosa or English and the transcripts analyzed using the framework method. All of the respondents complained of a lack of information and poor understanding of the triage process.<sup>4</sup> Aacharya et al, BMC Emergency Medicine 2011 an ethical analysis, In emergency department triage, medical care might lead to adverse consequences like delay in providing care, compromise in privacy and confidentiality, poor physician-patient communication, failing to provide the necessary care altogether, or even having to decide whose life to save when not everyone can be saved.<sup>5</sup> Reisi Z, et al, The level of awareness of the emergency department nurses of the triage principles in teaching hospitals concluded that most of the nurses had poor awareness about the implementation of triage. Therefore, it is suggested to improve the treatment services, organizing triage periodic training workshops, implementing interventions and educational research in this field, and equipping the

emergency environment to increase staff awareness.<sup>6</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The knowledge and attitude of visitor in triaging process carried out in Patan hospital emergency department is fairly good in contrary to assumptions probably due to some limitation.

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