

HOSPITAL REFERRAL TO A COMMUNITY PROGRAMME FOR YOUTH INJURED BY VIOLENCE: A FEASIBILITY STUDY

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Background Youth violence is an immense burden in Canada. Violence is a recurring condition—20–40% of youth injured by violence will be reinjured within the next year.

Aims/Objectives/Purpose To assess the feasibility of referring youth injured by violence to community based intervention programmes.

Methods Youth presenting to St. Michael's Hospital Emergency Department and Trauma Service were approached to participate in the study. Information about the study was conveyed using a computer tablet. Youth completed an online baseline survey. If a youth consented to participation, a research coordinator linked the youth with their chosen community partner.

Results/Outcome Sixty youth (27% of eligible patients) were approached and 19 (32%) chose to participate. 92% were male and the average age was 19.3. In the prior 6 months, 71% of participants had been in a physical fight, with 35% of all participants having visited an emergency department for a fight related injury. Fourteen youth (70% of enrolled) chose a community programme; however, five were unable to be contacted the following day to facilitate the referral.

Significance/Contribution to the Field This feasibility study demonstrates the complexity of recruiting and referring a high-risk population to community resources. The results from this study will be used to develop a larger study to determine the effectiveness of these referrals in reducing future intentional injury.