



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE UNINSURED RECEIVING CARE FROM A MENTAL HEALTH FREE CLINIC

Fattima Jamal Ahmed (Akiko Kamimura)
Department of Sociology

Populations who are disadvantaged and uninsured receive an outlet to healthcare services through free clinics. There is a need to determine who patients of free clinics are and whether they have experiences related to substance abuse, or other problems. There is also a need to conduct research on free clinics that solely provide mental health services, as ample current studies on this matter do not exist. As a result, a research study was conducted to identify characteristics of uninsured patients who receive care from a mental health free clinic. At the inception of this project in September 2013 to March 2014, three undergraduate students and one graduate student collected surveys. During May and June 2014, I contributed by reviewing patient charts. In addition, I participated in preparing the manuscript with other students. Charts for all 157 new patients were reviewed and 32 follow-up patients completed a self-administered survey. Chart review findings include anxiety and depression as the most frequent diagnoses among mental health free clinic patients. In addition, reports from the chart review reflected lifetime experience of sexual abuse in new patients at nearly 40%. Findings from the survey include reports from free mental health clinic patients, as they experience lower mental and physical functioning, compared to the US general population.

The following manuscript is currently under review by a peer-reviewed journal: Kamimura A., Gardner, N., Ahmed, F., Nourian, M. M., Myers K., & Olson, ML. "Health status and social characteristics among the uninsured using a free clinic"

