

Study of Certification Cases Handled in Department of Psychiatry in a Tertiary Care Hospital

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Abstract: *This study was done to understand the extent and pattern of disability certifications done by the department of psychiatry. The data of one year period was collected from RMO and Medical Record Office and analysed to obtain socio demographic relationship with certification in psychiatry. The certification process was also compared with other departments in Civil Hospital Ahmedabad. The certificates were given for intellectual disability, specific learning disability, autism and other mental disorder. Total of 614 certificates were given in one year, of which 85.8% were certified before age of 30 and 62% were male patients.*

Keywords: mental disability, certification, intellectual disability, autism, specific learning disability

1. Introduction

The 2001 census of India revealed that 21 million, i.e. 2.13% of total population suffer from disabilities [1]. The National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) estimates that 75% of person with disability live in rural areas. In a prevalence study among rural community of Karnataka, 2.3% of population suffers from mental disability [3]. There are benefits provided by government for those with disabilities for which one needs to be certified with degree of disability. After the implementation of the persons with the disability (PWD) act 2016, disabled people as well as caregivers have become more aware about the disability benefits accorded by the state and central government. The disabilities which can be certified under psychiatry are intellectual disability, specific learning disability, autism, schizophrenia and other mental disorder, dementia and certification through medical board, BSF, Railways and other government and semi-government institution. This study is conducted to evaluate certification in Civil Hospital, Ahmedabad to evaluate about awareness in rural and urban area, along with age, gender and disorder wise discrimination in obtaining certificate.

2. Literature Survey

The dictionary meaning of a medical certificate is straightforward - "a document stating the result of a satisfactory medical examination. The first requirement of a medical certificate for the detention of a lunatic was by the 1774 Madhouses Act, section 21, but they were called "orders", not "certificates"; the name for the medical document became certificate under the 1828 Madhouses Act (Roberts 1981). According to the New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, the word 'certify' was first used for declaring a person officially insane in the late 19th century (Roberts 1981). One of the earliest mental certificates was issued by the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1902.^[4]

Although the Mental Health Act was passed in 1987, the disability of such persons was not adequately addressed until the Persons with Disability (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) (PWD) Act of 1995. Disability in this Act includes seven conditions: blindness,

low vision, leprosy-cured, hearing impairment, locomotor disability, mental retardation and other mental illnesses The PWD Act (1995) did not prescribe guidelines for evaluation and assessment of mental illness and the specific procedures for certification. After the implementation of the persons with the disability (PWD) act 2016 apart from intellectual disability and chronic mental illness autistic spectrum disorder and specific learning disability have been included in the list of certifiable disability. [5]

With regard to assessment of disability related to mental illness it was agreed that the Indian Disability Evaluation and Assessment Scale (IDEAS, 2002) developed by the Rehabilitation Committee of the Indian Psychiatric Society (IPS) through a Task Force should be used with modifications for the purposes of the Act. The intelligent quotient (IQ) is assessed using standardized instruments such as Stanford Binet test, Binet Kamat Test, Wechsler's Intelligence Scales, Malin's Intelligence Scale for Indian Children, Seguin Form Board etc. A disability certificate is issued by a Medical Board duly constituted by the Central/State Government. At least, one shall be a specialist in the area of mental retardation, i.e., a psychiatrist, paediatrician or a clinical psychologist. The examination process will consist of three components: clinical assessment, assessment of adaptive behaviour and intellectual functioning. The disability is calculated as follows: Disability scoring = 110 - IQ. For example, if IQ score is 40, the disability is 70% (110 - 40 = 70)[4].

Parents of severely disabled persons with autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation and multiple disabilities feel a sense of insecurity regarding the welfare of their wards after their death. National Trust Act of 1999, for persons with autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation and multiple disabilities has provisions for legal guardianship of the four categories and creation of enabling environment for as much independent living as possible. It has been implementing the Supported Guardianship Scheme to provide financial security to persons with severe disabilities who are destitute and abandoned by supporting the cost of guardianship.

3. Method

After taking permission from Superintendent of our hospital and approval from ethics committee, B.J. Medical college and Civil Hospital, Ahmedabad, details of certificates given by Department of Psychiatry, Civil Hospital, Ahmedabad in one year period i.e. 01-04-2016 to 31-03-2017 for various disabilities (Mental Retardation, Autism, Specific Learning Disorders, Other Mental Disorders etc.) were obtained from RMO office and Medical Record Office and recorded into a master chart and analysed. Data was entered in Microsoft Excel Sheet. Statistical analysis was done by using Microsoft Excel and Chi-square test. Various correlations were made thereafter.

4. Results/Discussion

In our study we found that extensive disability certification work was done in our department. Total of 44104 patients were attended in Psychiatry opd of which 614 were certified by our department in last 1 year; in which 596 were disability certificates and 18 were fitness certificate. There were 382 males and 214 females certified.

Table 1: Analysis of disability Certifications with Age

Age	MR	Autism	SLD	Other	Total
<30	486	10	31	0	527
>30	64	0	0	5	69

Chi square: 33.47
 P value < 0.05
 Statistically significant*

Table 2: Analysis of disability Certifications with Area

Area	MR	Autism	SLD	Other	Total
Urban	458	9	31	3	501
Rural	92	1	0	2	95

Chi square: 5.69
 P value < 0.05
 Statistically significant*

Table 3: Analysis of disability certificates given by Various Departments in last year

Department	Total number of patients in opd	Total disability certificates given	Percentage
Psychiatry	44104	596	1.35
Orthopedics	116798	2033	1.74
ENT	72014	267	0.37

The study revealed that from total of 614 patients certified, 550 were for intellectual disability, 31 of dyslexia, and 10 for autism and rest for other disabilities. This may be because of screening program held among school students in School Health Program held each from where children are referred for diagnosis and certification. In this program children are screened specifically for intellectual disability and other developmental disorder.

The screening program done in young age may also have led to the statistically significant difference in disability certification with age, for 527 (85.8%) patients were certified before age of 30.

The disability certificates were given statistically more among urban population, as 501 (81.6%) [458- MR, 9- Autism, 31-Dyslexia, 3-Other] patients certified were from urban locality with only 95 [92- MR, 1-Autism, 3-Other] from rural. This difference points towards lack of awareness among rural population where there is more requirement for economic and medical help is required.

In our department 596 disability certificates were given out of 44104 (proportion=1.35) patients in the opd in last year (Orthopedics – 2033/116795: proportion-1.74, ENT- 267/72014: proportion- 0.37).

Analysis of disability Certifications with Sex, Analysis of mental retardation Certifications with Age, Sex and Area came out to be insignificant.

5. Conclusion

Awareness regarding disability certification and getting benefits from government thereof is growing. Ours being state government run institution, a lot of certification work comes to us. More and more certification centres need to be developed to cover maximum persons with disabilities. Programs in rural areas might help spreading awareness.

6. Future Scope

In future study with comparison with actual prevalence can be carried out to analyse actual gap. The purpose for obtaining certificate can be analysed to help identify lacking area where awareness needs to be created.

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