What did home treatment teams do in the COVID pandemic?

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Background

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a "lockdown" in the UK. All people were required to stay at home, except for very limited purposes, certain businesses and venues were closed, and all gathering of more than two people in public were stopped. All health services were impacted, whether this was because of a need to treat COVID patients, or a need to continue to provide services for other health problems. It was anticipated that the pandemic, and the restrictions, would impact the mental health of the population. Little has been written about the clinical activity of mental health services during this period. Here, we describe the activity of Home Treatment Teams in Birmingham and Solihull at that time.

Aims and Hypothesis

To evaluate the clinical activity of Home Treatment Teams during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Methods

Electronic records were examined for all individuals referred to the Birmingham and Solihull's Home Treatment Teams in April 2020 (n=1378).

Results

Figure 1: Graph showing sex of patients referred to Home Treatment Teams

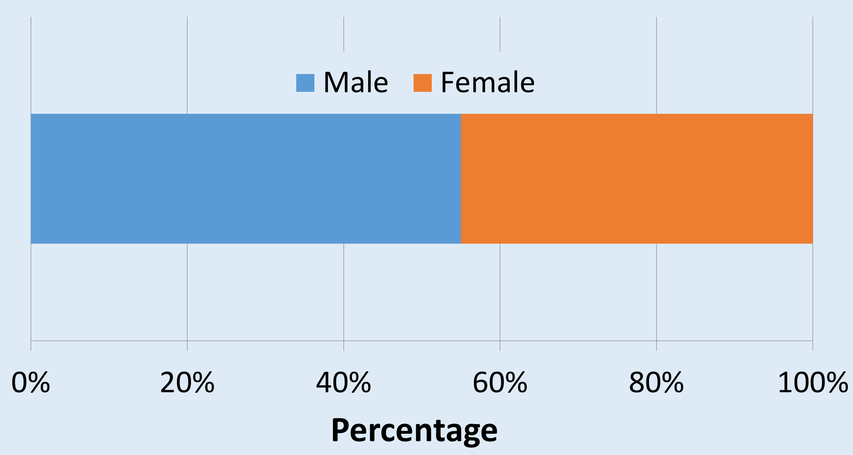


Figure 2: Source of referral to Home Treatment Teams

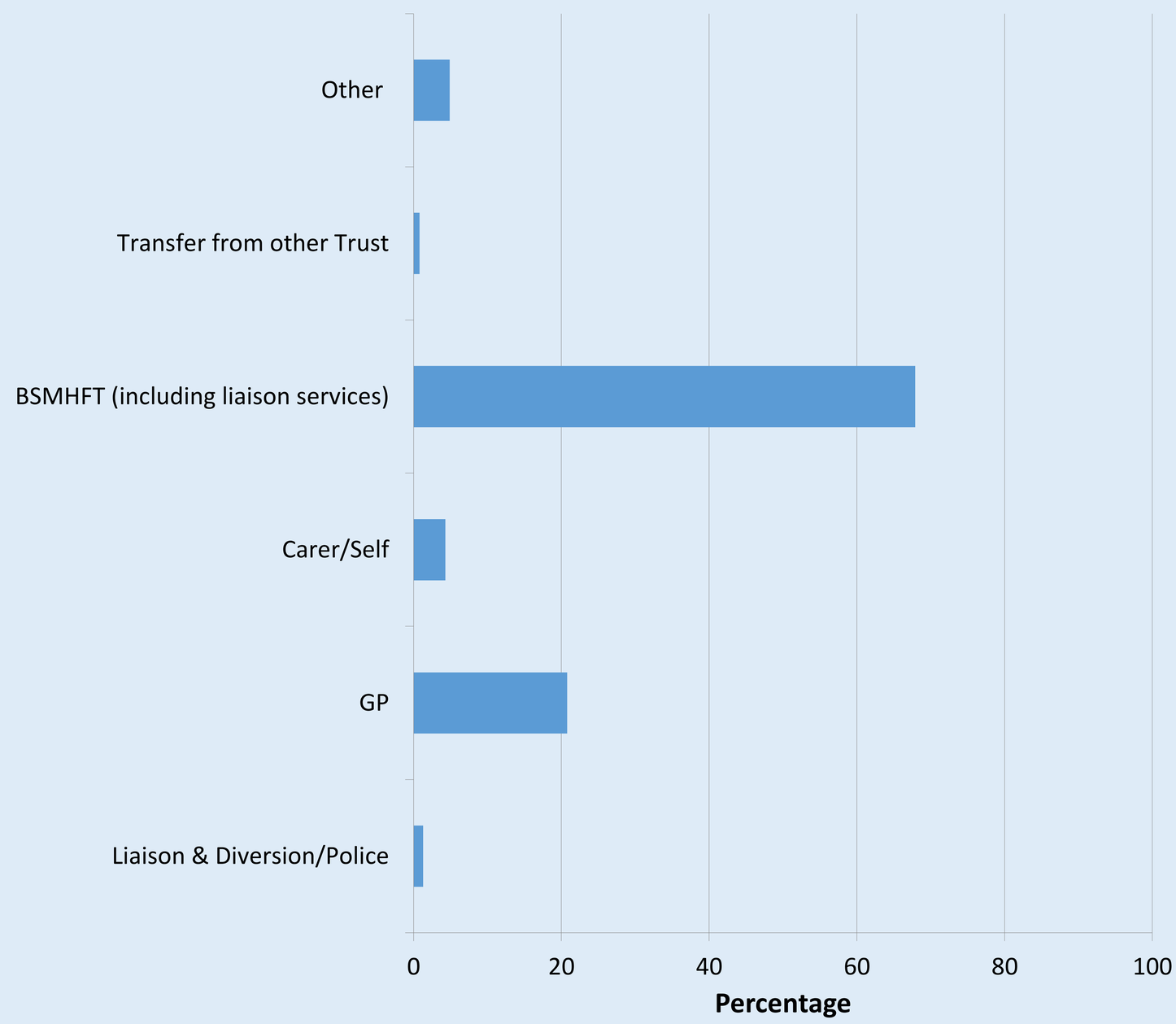


Figure 3: Pie chart of time spent under care of Home Treatment Team following referral

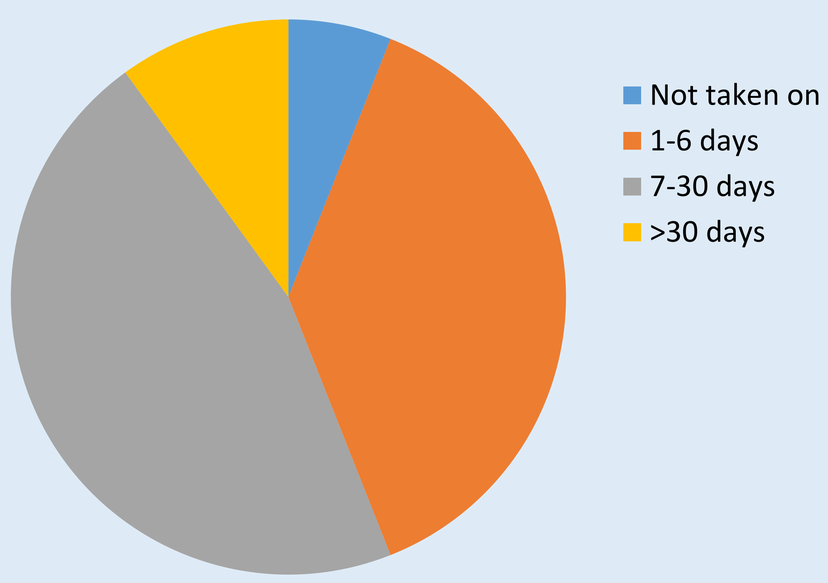


Figure 4: Graph showing primary diagnosis of patients referred to Home Treatment Team in April 2020

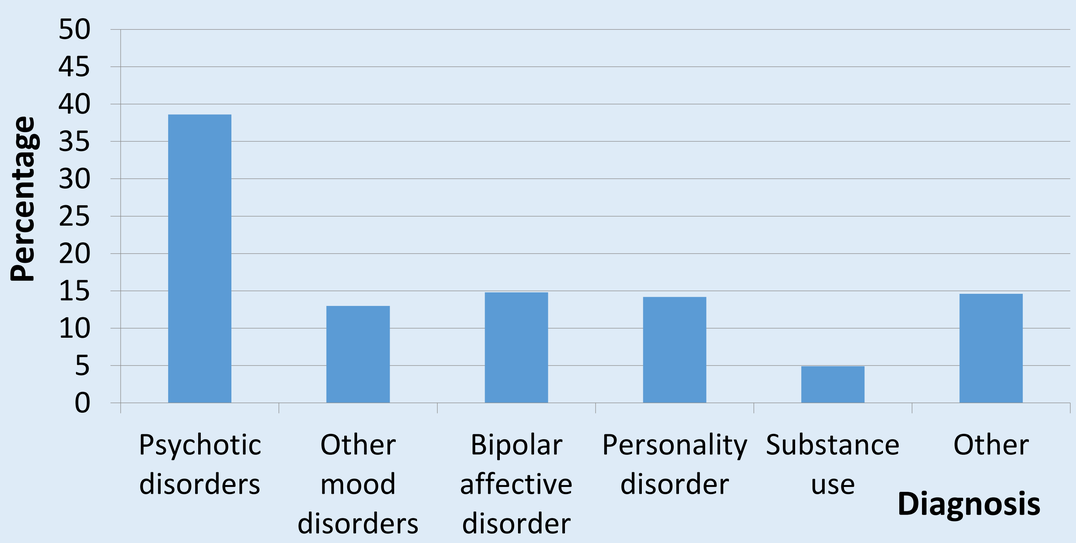
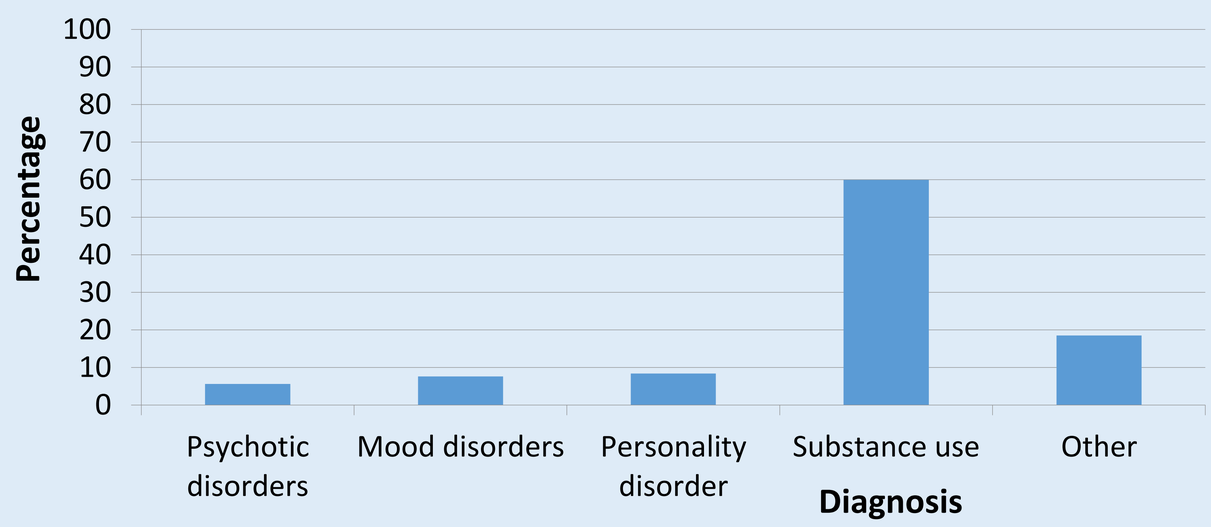


Figure 5: Graph showing secondary diagnosis of patients referred to Home Treatment Team in April 2020



Conclusion

The home treatment teams received a high number of referrals in this month. We were unsurprised that a large number of individuals were referred via acute hospitals, via the psychiatric liaison teams. Patients generally received intensive home treatment for up to one month, with almost half being discharged within one week. Most patients had significant mental illnesses, but we were surprised by the high levels of diagnosed substance misuse disorders.