

Abstract

Objective – to identify the characteristics associated with repeated self-harm in the consultation-liaison psychiatric setting at a regional public hospital in Hong Kong by comparing patients who had single episode of self-harm with patients who had repeated self-harm. Methods – a retrospective cohort study was conducted in Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital. All patients aged 18 – 64 years old with self-harm who received consultation-liaison psychiatric service during 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2013 were included. Sociodemographic and clinical data were collected from hospital records. The patients were monitored until 31 December 2014 for the occurrence of repeated self-harm. Results – 628 patients presented with self-harm during the study period. The rate of repeated self-harm in 1 year was calculated to be 23.2% (95% confidence interval, 19.9 – 26.5%) by survival analysis. The median time to repetition of self-harm in 1 year was 109.0 days (interquartile range, 39.0 – 227.5 days). Significant risk factors for repeated self-harm identified by multivariate Cox regression analysis included marital status, history of mental illness, physical illness, previous self-harm, and previous aggression. Conclusion – there were significant risk factors associated with repeated self-harm. Such information would be valuable to the assessment and management of patients with self-harm.

Keywords: repeated, repetition, self-harm, suicide attempt, consultation-liaison