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Risk Evaluation Of Errors Arising From Patients Identification In An Obstetric Unit Of A Teaching Hospital

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Objectives:

To determine the frequency of similarity in names and hospital registry number and to quantify the risk for misidentification in patients admitted at the Obstetric Unit in a teaching Hospital.

Methods:

This was a descriptive study involving 2168 hospital admissions during October 2012 and September 2013. Data from hospital records (name, date of admission, hospital registry number, bed number, date of hospital discharge) were used for analysis. Statistical analysis of risk categorisation was made by deriving an algorithm for text comparison to soundex for names and hospital registry numbers.

Results:

Similarity was observed in 75.1% for the first name, 81.5% for the surname and 18.5% for the full name. The frequencies to similar-sounding were 91.2, 89.2 and 31.5 for first name, surname and full name respectively. Regarding to calendar period, the higher incidence of similarities between names and surname (17.5%) occurred during the first week of December 2012, and when analysed by the soundex, the incidence in this period increased to 29.5%. Furthermore in this period 2.1% of women at risk stayed in the same hospital room during three days.

Conclusion:

In our Obstetric Unit we observed similarities in names and sounding names. Similarities were mainly present for surname and for name sounding. Therefore the study demonstrates the need to call patients by their full name in order to reduce the risk for errors in health care assistance.