The Scaphoid Train
An Audit of Patients with Suspected Scaphoid Fractures in the Emergency Department of Sligo University Hospital

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**Introduction**

A patient referred for a scaphoid x-ray is akin to a passenger going on a train journey. Once started it’s a very specific pathway with only certain points down the line where patients can disembark. This poster highlights the journey of patients referred for scaphoid x-rays in Sligo Emergency Department from June to August, 2015.

**Aims & Objectives**

- To quantify the time patients, without a fracture, spent immobilised.
- To identify the number of review clinic appointments utilised for each patient.
- To document mechanism of injury of patients who had a fracture of the scaphoid bone.
- To identify number of MRI scans completed.
- To identify areas of improvement in our management of patients with suspected scaphoid fractures.

**Methods**

- Audit of 60 patients with suspected scaphoid fractures presenting to the ED, identified using the radiology PAC system.
- Data was collected retrospectively from patients ED notes.

**Diagnoses of Scaphoid Fracture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Presentation</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review clinic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mechanism of Injury of Scaphoid Fracture**

- Punch: 1
- Exact Mechanism Unknown: 1
- Direct Impact: 1
- Fell on Outstretched Hand: 1

**Nos. of Days Patients Wrist Immobilised without Scaphoid Fracture**

- 14
- 10–14
- 5–10
- 1–5
- >21

**Scaphoid Route Map**

- 41 Patients Eligible for Scaphoid Pathway
- 20 Patients on Pathway with no bony injury

**Diagnoses on MRI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fracture Scaphoid</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fracture Radius</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganglion Cyst</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Abnormality</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total MRI of Scaphoid</td>
<td>14</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

- These patients require a large number of review clinic appointments in the ED.
- A significant number of patients are immobilised without bony injury.
- This can be an inconvenience for patients, in some cases leaving them unable to drive or work and may lead to financial losses.

**Recommendations**

- Introduction of a Clinical Scaphoid Score to help improve identification of patients with suspected scaphoid fractures.
- A re-audit to evaluate the effectiveness of the clinical scaphoid score.

**Actions**

- This audit was presented to staff within Sligo Emergency Department.
- Educational sessions have taken place.
- Clinical information posters on the Clinical Scaphoid Score have been placed in clinical areas.

**References**