Patients admitted from the Emergency Department into an Acute Medicine bed for less than twenty four hours- are these admissions justified?


• Explicit approach: we used the activities recorded in the patients medical and nursing notes covering their time in the AMU

• Implicit approach: three consultants in Acute Medicine were given copies of 120 sets of notes randomly selected from the 300 patients and independently asked to judge if the patients admission was justified or not and a majority decision was taken.

• Using the explicit approach 257 met one or more of the AMU criteria (86%). Of the 120 cases reviewed by experts, 84 (70%) were considered justified.

• Conclusion: Using two different approaches the rates of justified admission do not suggest an excessive unjustified admission rate for this population who can be difficult to assess and to rapidly exclude serious pathology.