The glasgow coma scale clinical application in emergency departments

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ANDRIANA IANKOVA discusses the use of the Glasgow Coma Scale assessment tool in adult patients with head injury whose levels of consciousness may be compromised by alcohol

About one million people with head injuries attend emergency departments (EDs) every year in the UK (Surgical Tutor 2006). On average, 150,000 of these are admitted to hospital (Headway 2006, Treadwell and Mendelow 1994) and most are discharged within 48 hours (Flint 1999).

Glasgow Coma Scale is a neurological scale developed by Teasdale and Jennett and is also known as Glasgow Coma Score. It is used to record consciousness levels of the person. Glasgow coma scale is routinely used in head injuries and other central nervous system conditions. The scale comprises three tests: eye, verbal and motor responses. The three values separately, as well as their sum, are considered. The lowest possible GCS (the sum) is 3 (implies deep coma or death), whilst the highest is 15 (implies fully awake person). Glasgow Coma Scale.