BEHAVIORAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (BERT)

Emergency Department Team

MARCH 2026 REPORT

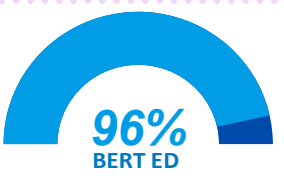
The Behavioral Emergency Response Team (BERT) are psychiatrically trained health care professionals that respond to any perceived or impending behavioral emergencies in various locations within Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital. BERT provides a trauma-informed approach and utilizes principles of Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) to de-escalate behavioral emergencies. The BERT ED Team are BERT staff reporting to the Department of Psychiatry and are stationed in the Emergency Department for immediate support.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

BERT ED INTERVENTIONS

March	Cumulative*
789	2,254

*Cumulative counts are data since January 2026



BERT ED Successful Interventions

Three Criteria for a Successful Intervention:

1. Patient/visitor remained safe of injury
2. Staff remained safe of injury
3. BERT performed an intervention that:
   a. de-escalated the challenging behavior/behavioral emergency OR
   b. did not escalate a challenging behavior

Escort Patient to PES (Warm Handoff)

Verbal Redirection

Active Listening

Assist with Discharge of Bx Challenging Patient

EXAMPLE OF A SUCCESSFUL BERT ED INTERVENTION

VERBAL REDIRECTION, VERBAL DE-ESCALATION, and ACTIVE LISTENING

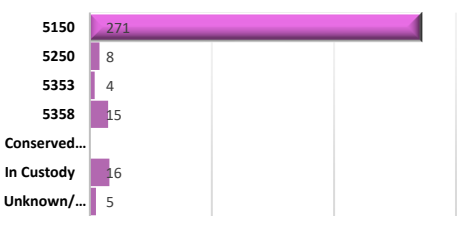
A patient was observed being verbally aggressive towards the primary nurse after receiving education regarding fall risk while being assisted to the bathroom. The patient then approached the primary nurse with a clinched fist. BERT intervened and separated the patient from the staff and redirected the patient back to the assigned room. The patient was receptive to engaging with BERT and expressed that he was upset because he felt disrespected by the staff. BERT acknowledged the patient's feelings and reinforced the importance of using non-threatening methods of communication when interacting with staff. The patient agreed to discontinue the negative behavior and to use his call light when requesting for staff.

EXAMPLE OF AN UNSUCCESSFUL BERT ED INTERVENTION

BERT responded to assist in locating a patient on a legal hold after a Code Green was activated. The patient was found in the Rad hallway and redirected to return to the assigned room. The patient was uncooperative and insisted on leaving. BERT supported the primary nurse during administration of emergent PO medications, but the patient spat out the medication. The patient then attempted to leave the room again and upon redirection, the patient became aggressive and combative. BERT assisted in redirecting the patient back to bed and applying soft restraints for safety. During containment, the patient attempted to bite and slapped a BERT staff member's hand. The primary RN administered emergent IM medications. SFSO was called for additional support and BERT assisted with escorting the patient to PES for safety.

BERT ED INTERVENTIONS

(All data related to the interventions are counts per episode)



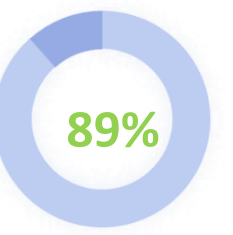
Patient Legal Hold/Status

(documented events)

22

Involvement in Code 50s

*BERT documented support for 22 documented Code 50s

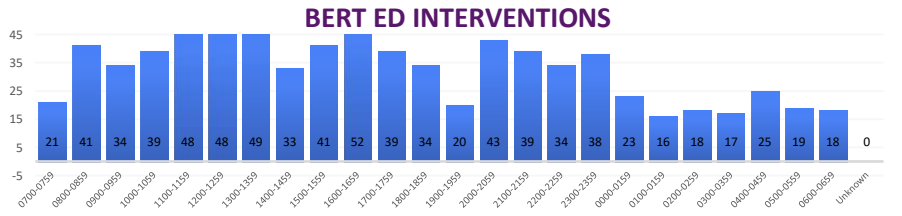


BERT ED Interventions WITHOUT Law Enforcement Present (%)

*Counts do not include escorts for patients on legal holds or interventions with incomplete documentation to evaluate this criteria

TIME

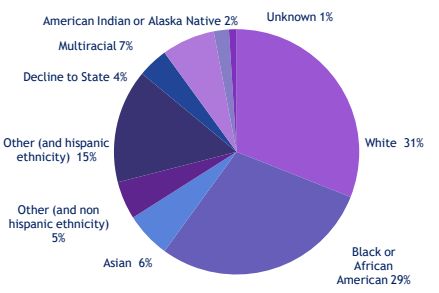
BERT ED INTERVENTIONS



PATIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

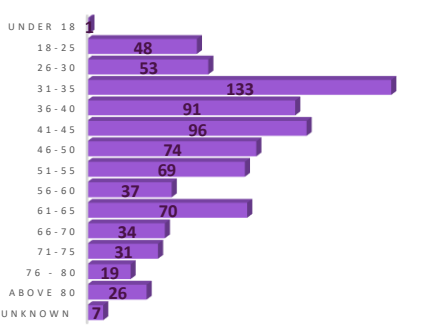
BERT ED INTERVENTIONS

RACE



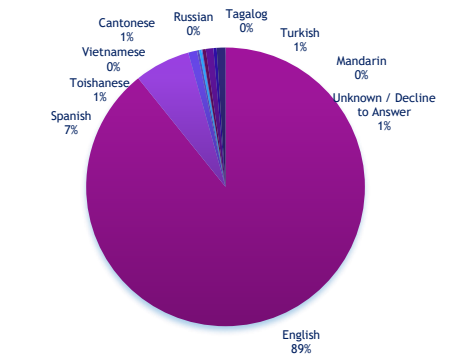
*Black or African American, Decline to State, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Other, White. Unknown refers to BERT Activations/Calls involving visitors.

AGE



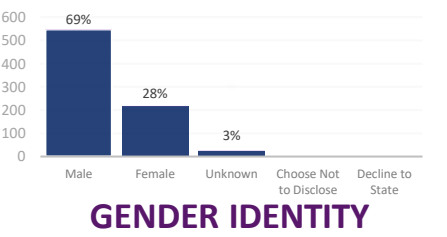
* Unknown refers to BERT interventions involving visitors

PREFERRED LANGUAGE

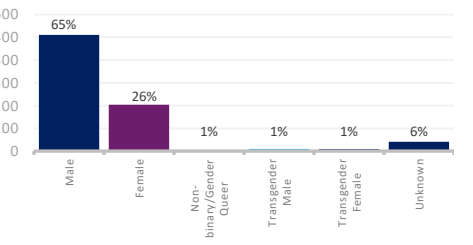


*BERT currently has staff certified as proficient in Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese and Burmese and has members that can communicate in Spanish and Tagalog

SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH



GENDER IDENTITY



*Unknown refers to visitors and/or declined to state on EPIC

March Monthly Safety Tip Topic:

Limit Setting

BERT ED

March 2026 REPORT

For further information about BERT, please contact:

Yin Theint, MSN, RN
Nurse Manager
yin.theint@sfdph.org