



ARCBITE



Brokering Innovation Through Evidence

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Do people living in disadvantaged circumstances receive different mental health treatments than those from less disadvantaged backgrounds?

Background

Socio-economic status (SES) has been linked to treatment outcomes for mental health problems, but little to no literature has explored the effects of SES on access to both medication and psychological therapy.

SES can be partly measured by Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) factors, such as income, housing, employment status, education and more factors like lifestyle.

How did we involve people?

A team of researchers including academics, psychologists, psychiatrists and one public adviser at the analysis stage were involved.

What was the aim of the project?

The aim of this study was to explore whether access to mental health treatments differed by SES.

What did we do?

The North West Coast Household Health Survey (HHS) collected data from residents aged 18+ from across 20 disadvantaged and 8 less disadvantaged neighbourhoods in 2015, and from 20 disadvantaged neighbourhoods in 2018.

Logistic regression was used to explore the effects of SES on access to treatment (medication, psychological therapy) for people who had experienced mental health problems in the past 12 months.



What we found and what does this mean?

Of 6,860 participants, 2,932 reported experiencing mental health problems in the past 12 months. People from more disadvantaged backgrounds experienced greater rates of anxiety and depression.

Anti-depressant and anti-psychotic medication treatment was significantly more common in residents with lower SES, as well as counselling.

Regression analysis showed that residents from more disadvantaged neighbourhoods who reported mental distress were more likely to receive medication.

What next?

This appears to be the first study showing higher levels of treatment with medication and psychological therapy in people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Future research needs to address the underlying factors associated with increased mental health treatment uptake in people from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Research in full

Giebel, C., Corcoran, R., Goodall, M. et al.

Do people living in disadvantaged circumstances receive different mental health treatments than those from less disadvantaged backgrounds?. BMC Public Health 20, 651 (2020).

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What is NIHR CLAHRC / ARC North West Coast?

The Applied Research Collaboration North West Coast (ARC NWC) superseded CLAHRC NWC in September 2019. It is a partnership between universities, NHS, public, etc.

Its mission is to undertake applied research to improve public health, wellbeing, quality of care & reduce health inequalities across the North West Coast region.

<https://arc-nwc.nihr.ac.uk/>