

ARCBITE

Brokering Innovation Through Evidence

March 2022

Mental Health Conditions in Healthcare



COVID-19 has, like previous pandemics, placed a considerable burden on health and care services.

As the need and demands for healthcare has risen due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the pressures placed on those providing care have grown significantly.

Although previous reviews have assessed the prevalence of mental health conditions associated with different types of pandemics, they have limitations and exclude more recent evidence.

What was the aim of the project?

We aimed to investigate the prevalence and incidence of mental health conditions in healthcare workers during and after pandemics similar to, and including COVID-19

What did we do?

We conducted a systematic review. Our review followed recognised guidance and reporting standards and used a pre-determined search strategy as outlined in our review's published protocol.

We analysed the prevalence and incidence of the different mental health conditions in health and care workers. We produced sub-group analyses for the pandemic period (pre-and-post), for age, country income, country, and clinical setting for major depression disorder, anxiety disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

How did we involve people?

The review was commissioned by a clinician from one of our ARC NWC member organisations. Public Advisers provided comments on our draft findings and reports.

What did we find?

A total of 43 studies were eligible for inclusion in our review. No studies reported incidence rates for any mental health condition or symptom.



Most studies examined SARS (n=30) and COVID-19 (n=6) pandemics and most (n=27) took place in high-income-countries.

We found that the most common mental health condition in healthcare workers exposed to these pandemics was post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (21.7%), followed by anxiety disorder (16.1%), major depression disorder (13.4%) and acute stress disorder (7.4%). For symptoms of these conditions, there was substantial variation in the prevalence estimates for depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Frontline staff, particularly nurses, who are highly exposed to pandemic conditions were found to be at increased risk of having mental health issues.

Conclusion

- Mental health disorders affect healthcare workers during and after mass infectious disease pandemics. The risks are evident and necessitate action.

What next?

Our review provides prevalence estimates of mental health conditions for those healthcare workers exposed to mass infectious disease outbreaks.

Our findings may be used to inform services, strategies to reduce the staffing impact, and the development of preventative strategies for those healthcare workers who may be more vulnerable to, or at high risk of developing mental health symptoms and conditions during, and after, a pandemic.

Full report:

Hill, J.E., Harris, C., Christian D.L., Boland, P., Doherty, A.J., Benedetto, V., Gita, B.E. & Clegg, A.J. (2022). The prevalence of mental health conditions in healthcare workers during and after a pandemic: Systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 00, 1–23. (online ahead of print) <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35150151/>

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