

RISK OF DEATH AND DEMENTIA DIAGNOSIS IN OLDER PATIENTS WITH SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS IN SECONDARY CARE

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Aims and Methods

We examined the rates of death and dementia in older people referred into a secondary care psychiatric service across a range of serious mental illnesses.

We used an anonymised dataset across 6 consecutive years (2013-19) with 28,340 patients aged 65 years and older.

We identified deaths and incident dementia in patients with bipolar disorder/mania, schizophrenia, recurrent depression and anxiety disorders and compared mortality and dementia rates between these diagnosis groups. We also examined mortality rates and dementia rates compared with general population rates.

Due to excess of diagnosis entry just after referral, follow-up started from at least a year after referral. This allowed exclusion of prevalent cases of dementia at referral from the cohorts.



Standardized incidence rates compared to general population

	deaths		dementia	
	N	SMR(95% CI)	N	SIR(95% CI)
Bipolar/mania	319	2.6(2.0-3.3)	221	2.7(1.5-4.1)
Schizophrenia	213	3.5(2.6-4.5)	153	2.9(1.5-4.7)
Recurrent depression	579	2.5(2.0-3.0)	370	3.8(2.6-5.2)
Anxiety	729	1.8(1.4-2.2)	430	4.3(3.0-5.7)

Results and Conclusions

This is the first UK study in a single mental health trust examining the rates of death and dementia in serious mental illnesses.

This study has a very large data set.

Compared to the general population, patients referred into an old age psychiatry service show higher rates of dementia and death.

Patients with schizophrenia and recurrent depression showed higher mortality than the anxiety group.

There were no significant differences between the illness groups in dementia incidence. This might be due to dementia presenting as depression and anxiety.