

Issue 27 November 2019

News

Maudsley Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) Conference

In September 2019, around 300 researchers, clinicians, students, partner organisations and service users gathered at the Royal College of Physicians in London for the Maudsley BRC conference. The theme of the conference was 'New Technologies and Mechanisms in Mental Health'. It was great to see some of you there on the day but for those who didn't attend the event was filmed and is available to watch [here](#).

CRIS Archive

The CRIS Archive is a new page on the Maudsley BRC website which provides an online space for showcasing non-peer-reviewed research projects and MSc dissertations that have utilised the CRIS resource but that may not otherwise be available publically. You can check it out [here](#).

Research Spotlight

In each newsletter we will highlight recent research that has been conducted using linked data, if you would like to know more about any particular piece of work please let us know.

Risk of acute pancreatitis among people with severe mental illness (SMI)

Mathew Vithayathil, Chin-Kuo Chang, Hitesh Shetty, and Robert Stewart

Severe mental illness (SMI), which includes schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, and bipolar affective disorder, is recognised to be associated with a higher risk of physical disease and mortality. The increased risk of physical diseases in people with SMI has been described previously for cardiovascular, respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases, however, most of the previous research has focused on cardiovascular and metabolic disorders. There is a need for further investigation into the health risks in order to develop prevention strategies against adverse health outcomes such as gastrointestinal diseases.

Acute pancreatitis is the leading cause of hospitalisations for gastroenterological reasons, it is associated with higher mortality and will progress to chronic pancreatitis in around 10% of cases. The most common risk factors for acute pancreatitis are gallstones and excessive alcohol intake. Previous research has found that individuals with SMI have an increased risk of alcohol use disorder, however no study to date has investigated the risk of acute pancreatitis in people with SMI. In order

to examine the association between SMI and acute pancreatitis the study team used data from CRIS linked to [Hospital Episode Statistics \(HES\)](#) to examine hospital admissions associated with acute pancreatitis in a large group of individuals with SMI.

Using CRIS, the team were able to identify a group of 22,337 people with a diagnosis of SMI (schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder or bipolar disorder) between 1st January 2008 and 31st March 2016. During the follow-up period, the team identified 80 individuals using the HES data who had a total of 148 hospital admissions for acute pancreatitis. In comparison to individuals without SMI, this is an increased risk of two-fold. Furthermore, alcohol use disorder was found to significantly raise the risk of acute pancreatitis in people with SMI. This increased risk provides support for taking active steps to reduce problematic alcohol intake in people with SMI.

There are recommendations for monitoring physical health in patients with SMI, however, these guidelines have previously been described as insufficient and inconsistent. The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has incorporated risk assessments for cardiac and metabolic disease into the Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) targets for patients with SMI as part of a strategy to improve physical health outcomes. However there is currently no recommendation for alcohol use disorder prevention strategies, despite findings that almost one quarter of people with SMI in acute psychiatric services reported excessive alcohol intake. Given the findings of this study, early identification and engagement with drug and alcohol services would aid in reducing the range of disorders associated with alcohol use disorder including severe outcomes such as acute pancreatitis.

If you would like to read the article in full, it is available [here](#).

Upcoming

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on **Thursday 12th December**, from **4-6pm**, in the BRC Nucleus Meeting Room. We look forward to seeing you then!

Future Newsletters

If there is anything that you would like to see in future newsletters or if you would like more information about something mentioned in a newsletter, you can contact Amelia or Megan via email: amelia.jewell@slam.nhs.uk / megan.pritchard@kcl.ac.uk, or phone: 020 3228 8554.