



Chronic Conditions

Psychological Wellbeing

Stage 2

Epidemiological Series Report # 2007-07

April 2007

Introduction

The following overview presents the prevalence of psychological wellbeing among the participants of the North West Adelaide Health Study, as well as the demographics and risk factors associated with different levels of psychological wellbeing. Questions regarding psychological wellbeing, as measured by the General Health Questionnaire 12 (GHQ-12), were included in Stage 2 of the study (conducted from 2004 to 2006).

Measurement and definition of psychological wellbeing

The prevalence of different levels of psychological wellbeing was calculated using data from the self report questionnaire using the Goldberg's General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12)¹. The GHQ-12 is a subset of the GHQ-28, and is a screening questionnaire for detecting current, independently verifiable forms of psychiatric illness, including depression, anxiety, social impairment and hypochondriasis. It does not make a clinical diagnosis. It is the most widely applied self completion measure of psychiatric disturbance in the UK and has numerous worldwide applications. Participants were asked 12 items which were scored together to gauge psychological wellbeing in this population. A score of 0 or 1 classifies persons as having "Low or no disturbance", 2 to 3 as having "Mild or moderate disturbance" and 4 or greater as having "High or severe disturbance".

Prevalence of psychological wellbeing

The prevalence of different levels of psychological wellbeing according to the GHQ-12 self report questionnaire for Stage 2 is shown in Table 1. Overall, in Stage 2, **11.1%** (95% CI 10.0-12.2) of study participants had a mild or moderate disturbance, and **13.5%** (95% CI 12.4-14.7) had a high or severe disturbance.

Table 1: Prevalence of psychological wellbeing – GHQ12 (Self Report)

	Stage 2	
	n	%
Low or no disturbance	2454	75.4
Mild or moderate disturbance	360	11.1
High or severe disturbance	440	13.5
Total	3254	100.0

* Note: (Stage 2) 6 participants had four or more GHQ variables missing and were excluded

Psychological wellbeing and current mental health condition – Stage 2

The levels of psychological well being were assessed in the participants who had also self reported a current mental health condition, that is anxiety, depression or a stress related problem. Of those participants with mild or moderate disturbance, **22.4%** (95% CI 18.3-27.0) reported a current mental health condition, and of those with a high or severe disturbance, **43.8%** (95% CI 39.2-48.6) reported a current mental health condition (Table 2).

Table 2: Prevalence of psychological wellbeing in those with a mental health condition

	Current mental health condition	
	n	%
Low or no disturbance	231	9.6
Mild or moderate disturbance	79	22.4
High or severe disturbance	186	43.8
Overall	496	15.5

¹ Goldberg DP, Hillier VF. A scaled version of the General Health Questionnaire. *Psychological Medicine* 1979; 9: 139 - 145.

The prevalence of being classified as having a high or severe disturbance in Stage 2 was 13.5%.

In those participants with high or severe disturbance, 43.8% also had a self reported current mental health condition.

Demographic profile of psychological wellbeing

The prevalence of high or severe psychological disturbance, as assessed by the GHQ-12, was statistically significantly higher among females, unrelated adults living together and step or sole parents, those separated, divorced, or never married, and those part-time or casually employed, unemployed or a student. The prevalence of a high or severe disturbance was significantly lower among those aged 55 to 74 years, those with a bachelor degree or higher and those earning above \$40,000 (Table 3).

Table 3: Univariate Odds Ratios for demographic variables associated with a high or severe psychological disturbance

Variable	n	%	OR	(95% CI)	p value
Sex					
Male	185/1596	11.6	1.00		
Female	255/1668	15.4	1.38	(1.13-1.69)	0.002
Age group					
20 to 24 years	38/233	16.2	1.00		
25 to 34 years	104/694	15.0	0.91	(0.61-1.37)	0.66
35 to 44 years	107/661	16.1	1.00	(0.66-1.49)	0.98
45 to 54 years	78/575	13.6	0.82	(0.54-1.24)	0.34
55 to 64 years	45/443	10.1	0.58	(0.37-0.93)	0.02
65 to 74 years	29/330	8.9	0.51	(0.30-0.84)	0.009
75 years and over	39/318	12.3	0.72	(0.45-1.17)	0.19
Highest education level obtained*					
Secondary	220/1448	15.2	1.00		
Trade/apprenticeship/cert/diploma	154/1199	12.8	0.82	(0.66-1.03)	0.08
Bachelor degree or higher	63/560	11.3	0.71	(0.53-0.96)	0.02
Gross annual household income*					
Up to \$20,000	105/611	17.2	1.00		
\$20,001- 40,000	123/745	16.5	0.95	(0.72-1.27)	0.74
\$40,001- 60,000	78/697	11.1	0.61	(0.44-0.83)	0.002
More than \$60,000	120/1072	11.1	0.61	(0.46-0.80)	0.001
Family structure*					
Family & children, 2 biological/adoptive parents	158/1207	13.1	1.00		
Adult living with partner, no children	93/888	10.5	0.78	(0.59-1.02)	0.07
Adult living alone	59/436	13.5	1.04	(0.75-1.43)	0.81
Adults – related/unrelated, living together	64/336	19.1	1.56	(1.14-2.15)	0.006
Step/sole/shared parenting & other	61/348	17.4	1.40	(1.01-1.94)	0.04
Marital status*					
Married or living with partner	262/2183	12.0	1.00		
Separated/divorced	53/276	19.3	1.75	(1.27-2.43)	0.001
Widowed	23/213	10.8	0.89	(0.57-1.39)	0.60
Never married	101/573	17.6	1.56	(1.21-2.00)	0.001
Work status*					
Full time employed	165/1474	11.2	1.00		
Part time/casual employed	97/544	17.8	1.72	(1.31-2.25)	<0.001
Unemployed	20/77	26.6	2.87	(1.68-4.88)	<0.001
Home duties/retired	117/997	11.7	1.05	(0.82-1.35)	0.70
Student/other	39/151	26.0	2.78	(1.87-4.13)	<0.001

*Not stated category not reported

Those with a high or severe disturbance were more likely to be: female; adults living together or step or sole parenting; separated, divorced, or never married; or those employed part time or casually, unemployed, or a student.

Risk Factor profile of psychological wellbeing

High or severe psychological disturbance, as assessed by the GHQ-12, was statistically significantly more likely among those who were current smokers and low risk drinkers. A high or severe disturbance was statistically significantly less likely in those who undertook exercise or had high blood pressure (Table 4).

Table 4: Univariate Odds Ratios for risk factor variables associated with a high or severe disturbance

Variable	n	%	OR	(95% CI)	p value
Smoking*					
Non-smoker	160/1491	10.7	1.00		
Ex-smoker	130/1109	11.7	1.11	(0.86-1.41)	0.43
Current smoker	150/653	22.9	2.48	(1.94-3.16)	<0.001
Alcohol Risk*					
Non-drinker, No risk	183/1588	11.5	1.00		
Low Risk	213/1364	15.6	1.42	(1.15-1.76)	0.001
Intermediate to High Risk	28/178	15.8	1.44	(0.93-2.21)	0.10
Physical activity*					
Sedentary	158/854	18.5	1.00		
Undertakes exercise	250/2107	11.9	0.59	(0.48-0.74)	<0.001
BMI*					
Underweight/Normal (<24.9)	142/1057	13.5	1.00		
Overweight (25 to 29.9)	149/1186	12.5	0.92	(0.72-1.18)	0.51
Obese (30 and over)	137/932	14.7	1.11	(0.86-1.43)	0.42
Waist Circumference(>95cm men, >80cm women)*					
Normal	141/1138	12.4	1.00		
High	279/2011	13.9	1.14	(0.92-1.42)	0.23
High blood pressure (≥140/90mmHg)*					
No	330/2342	14.1	1.00		
Yes	90/807	11.2	0.77	(0.60-0.99)	0.04

* Don't know/ refused/ not stated category not reported

Quality of life profile of psychological wellbeing

Figure 1 shows the mean scores of the SF-36 subscales for those with low or moderate disturbance and those with high or severe disturbance. People with high or severe disturbance scored statistically significantly lower on all dimensions of the SF-36 when compared with those with no, low, mild or moderate disturbance.

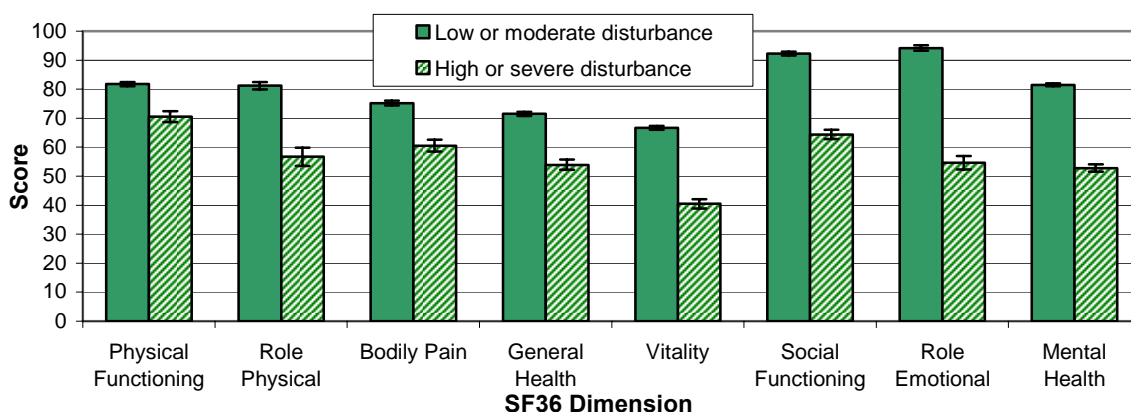


Figure 1: SF-36 mean scores for participants with and without depression

This document is one of a series of reports concerning Stage 2 of the North West Adelaide Health Study. Please see website for other reports in the series - www.health.sa.gov.au/pros/

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High or severe disturbance was statistically significantly more likely among those who were current smokers, low risk or drinkers.

People with high or severe disturbance have significantly lower quality of life scores for all dimensions of the SF-36.