

ResearchOne Data Service, 2015/16 – YHAHSN-Funded Projects

Lay Abstract

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Mortality, physical healthcare and mental disorder

People with mental health problems have shorter life expectancy than other people. Life expectancy is increasing for most people, but not for those with mental health problems. Most of the evidence that these things are true comes from outside the UK. The evidence from studies carried out in the UK has been unable to take the effect of economic status (relative poverty and relative wealth) into account when comparing life expectancy in people with and without mental health problems. This is important because economic status is linked both to lower life expectancy and to mental health problems.

If we are to do anything about the problem of shorter life expectancy among people with mental health problems in the UK, we need to know the size of the problem from reliable up to date figures from the UK which take into account the effect of economic status. We need baseline measures of mortality which can be used in the future to examine whether or not the gap in life expectancy between those with and without health problems is widening. We also need to know about any differences in life expectancy between people with different kinds of mental health problem.

We will compare the mortality rate in a group of people with mental health problems with a group without these problems. We will compare the mortality rate among people with different kinds of mental health problems. We will also compare how often each group sees their GP and look at whether there are any differences in the quality of physical health care provided to those with and without mental health problems because these may influence mortality rates.