



Research Snippet

Prevalence of Mental Health Disorders among Incoming Federal Men Offenders in Three Regions: Analysis by Age Group

KEY WORDS: *aging offenders, male offenders, mental disorders, prevalence of mental disorders*

What it means

Prevalence rates of current anxiety disorders, personality disorders, and substance abuse disorders are lower among men who are 55 years or older than among younger offenders. There is also evidence of a slight decline in rates of mood disorders in these older offenders. The finding that symptoms of some mental health disorders, notably personality disorders, decline with age has been reported in previous studies tracing the trajectories of individuals with mental disorders. Given the aging offender population, information on age-related variations in the diagnosis of mental disorder can be considered in planning mental health services.

What we found

Overall, there is a decline in the prevalence of most mental disorders with age. The highest prevalence rates across all ages were for substance abuse disorders and antisocial personality disorder. The apparent increase in psychotic disorders should be interpreted with caution given low numbers.

Why we did this study

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) requires information on the prevalence of major mental health disorders by age group among newly-admitted offenders to assist in planning for services for aging

offenders. Previous research has reported on rates of mental disorders among incoming male offenders in the CSC in three regions.

What we did

Participants were 588 male offenders who completed a Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV-TR Axis I and Axis II disorders upon admission to CSC. Admissions on new warrants of committal were approached to participate from April to December 2012 in the Atlantic, Ontario, and Pacific Reception Centres. Prevalence rates were analyzed across age groups to examine age-related differences.

For more information

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Prevalence Rates for Current Diagnosis of Major Mental Disorders among Incoming Men Offenders by Age Group

Disorder	Age 18–24	Age 25–34	Age 35–44	Age 45–54	Age 55+
	<i>n</i> = 109 %	<i>n</i> = 183 %	<i>n</i> = 148 %	<i>n</i> = 98 %	<i>n</i> = 50 %
Mood disorder	16.5	16.9	21.6	13.3	10.0
Psychotic disorder	3.7	3.3	2.7	5.1	8.0
Alcohol or substance abuse	50.5	52.5	52.0	44.9	30.0
Anxiety disorder	32.1	29.5	39.2	35.7	16.0
Eating disorder	0.0	0.6	1.4	1.0	0.0
Pathological gambling	4.6	5.5	10.1	3.0	10.0
Borderline personality disorder	16.5	18.0	17.6	15.3	8.0
Antisocial personality disorder	48.6	54.1	50.7	42.9	26.0