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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND MENTAL DISORDERS

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Background: There is little known about the extent to which men and women with mental disorders are at increased risk of being a victim of domestic violence. We therefore aimed to estimate the prevalence and risk of domestic violence victimisation among men and women with depressive and anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, eating disorders, psychotic disorders, and among psychiatric service users.
Methods: We searched 18 biomedical and social sciences databases (including MEDLINE, EMBASE and PsycINFO) and supplemented the search by hand searching of key journals and reference lists of included articles, citation tracking, expert recommendations, and updating a systematic review on victimisation among people with mental disorders. We included cross sectional, cohort and experimental studies that reported on the prevalence and/or risk of adulthood domestic violence victimisation among people meeting either ICD or DSM diagnostic criteria for a mental disorder. Two reviewers independently extracted data and appraised study quality. Random effects meta-analysis was used to pool data where possible.
Findings: High quality papers reported a median prevalence of adult lifetime domestic violence in mental health service users of 30% (IQR 26% - 39%) in female inpatients and 33% (IQR 31%-53%) in female outpatients. There was an increased risk of experiencing domestic violence in all diagnostic groups and in men and women but there were few high quality studies for men.
Interpretation: Mental disorder is associated with a high prevalence and increased risk of being a victim of domestic violence in both men and women.

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