

Co-morbid mental illness and chronic disease in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

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Introduction

The prevalence of co-morbid mental illness in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is three times higher in men and four times in women compared to the general Australian population (1). This adds to a well-known physical health gap (2). Given that few clinical diagnostic studies have existed for mental illness in this population until recent years (3, 4), it is unsurprising that the morbidity of mental illness amongst chronic disease sufferers of this population is poorly understood.

The purpose of this systematic review is to explore the prevalence of co-morbid mental health disorders amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with a chronic disease. Second, it is to identify how screening and treatment of mental health disorders in the chronic disease management setting may affect disease morbidity.

Status of Review

This study is in the data extraction phase. We share our search strategy and relevant background.

Methods

This study utilized PubMed, EMBASE, CINAHL, and Scopus. An initial search was performed with PudMed using the keywords: Indigenous Australian, chronic disease, and mental health. From this search, the first author gathered potential search terms by scanning titles, abstracts, and keyword lists of relevant literature. This study also employed the “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander” filter created by the Lowitja Institute. Keywords were utilized across all databases, and searches were limited to the title and abstract fields when possible. Relevant subject headings and/or index terms were utilized across all databases. Filters included English language, adults 18+, and year 1900+ where such filters existed.

We will check the reference lists and citing articles of included records for further papers for inclusion. References to other relevant studies from these reference lists will be reviewed through hand-searching.

Grey literature will be excluded.

Search Strategy

Along with query threads for “chronic disease”, the **top five** chronic disease causes of mortality for Aboriginal Australian and Torres Strait Islanders were included individually as a set of search terms in this review. Below is an excerpt of using one of these causes — cardiovascular disease — in an example search strategy for PubMed.

Term	Search	Limits
Cardiovascular disease	""Myocardial ischemia""[tiab] OR ""Acute Coronary Syndrome""[tiab] OR ""Angina Pectoris""[tiab] OR ""Stable angina""[tiab] OR ""Unstable angina""[tiab] OR ""Microvascular Angina""[tiab] OR ""Coronary Disease""[tiab] OR ""Coronary Aneurysm""[tiab] OR ""Coronary Artery Disease""[tiab] OR ""Coronary Occlusion""[tiab] OR ""Coronary Stenosis""[tiab] OR ""Coronary Thrombosis""[tiab] OR ""Coronary Vasospasm""[tiab] OR ""Myocardial Infarction""[tiab] OR ""Anterior Wall Myocardial Infarction""[tiab] OR ""Inferior Wall Myocardial Infarction""[tiab] OR ""Non-ST Elevated Myocardial Infarction""[tiab] OR ""Shock Cardiogenic""[tiab] OR ""ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction""[tiab] OR ""Myocardial Reperfusion Injur""[tiab] OR ""Heart disease""[tiab] OR ""Cardiovascular disease""[tiab] OR ""heart attack""[tiab] OR ""atherosclerosis""[tiab] OR ""vascular disease""[tiab] OR ""heart condition"" OR ""cardiac disease"" OR ""cardiac condition""	Adult: 19-44, 45+, 45-64, 65+, 80 and over: 80+ years Language: English Date: 1900-

AND

Concept	Search	Limits
Indigenous Australian and Torres Strait Islander peoples	((Indigenous[Title/Abstract] OR native[Title/Abstract] OR aborigin*[Title/Abstract] OR ""torres strait islander""[Title/Abstract] OR ""oceanic ancestry""[Title/Abstract] OR ""aboriginal""[Title/Abstract] OR ""aborigine""[Title/Abstract]) AND ((Australia*[Title/Abstract] OR Queensland[Title/Abstract] OR Tasmania*[Title/Abstract] OR ""Western Australia""[Title/Abstract] OR ""Northern Territory""[Title/Abstract] OR ""South Australia""[Title/Abstract] OR ""New South Wales""[Title/Abstract])) OR (Australia*[Affiliation] OR Queensland[Affiliation] OR Tasmania*[Affiliation] OR Western Australia*[Affiliation] OR Northern Territory[Affiliation] OR South Australia*[Affiliation] OR New South Wales[Affiliation])	Adult: 19-44, 45+, 45-64, 65+, 80 and over: 80+ years Language: English Date: 1900-

AND

Concept	Search
Mental health disorder(s) and treatment	See search strategy published on Prospero for full terms

Eligibility

Eligible study designs include case control, case series, cohort studies, randomized controlled trials, and cross-sectional analyses. Studies must be in the English language. The location of these studies must be Australia, and study populations should include adults older than eighteen of Indigenous Australian or Torres Strait Islander descent. Studies published prior to 1960 will not be included. All studies must be published.

No qualitative studies nor systematic or literature reviews will be included in this review, though they may be referred to for relevant discussion. Letters, opinion pieces, reviews, editorials, or grey literature will be excluded.

Additional inclusion criteria are listed below that will be utilized during the screening process.

- Must contain keyword regarding mental health
- Must contain keyword regarding chronic disease AND/OR one of the following chronic conditions: cardiovascular disease, chronic liver disease, cerebrovascular disease, lung cancer, or chronic lower respiratory conditions like COPD

Results

This review has produced 35 studies that meet eligibility criteria and are currently in extraction.

References

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