Author’s response to reviews

Title: The occurrence of comorbidities to affective and anxiety disorders among older people with intellectual disability in comparison with the general population: A register study

Authors:

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear editor,

We would like to thank you and the reviewers for considering our manuscript “The occurrence of comorbidities with affective and anxiety disorders among older people with intellectual disability compared with the general population: A register study” for publication. We hope that our revisions will be satisfactory for the reviewers and looking forward for your editorial decision.

Response to Reviewer’s comments bellow,

Gary J. Kennedy (Reviewer 1)

The authors provide an excellent exposition of an important problem.

However there is a conceptual problem of diagnosing affective and anxiety disorders among persons with intellectual disabilities which the authors speculate is due to 1) the patients' expressive limitations due to intellectual disabilities, and 2) providers' limitations in recognizing separate disorders among patients with intellectual disabilities.

1. May it also be true that the DSM5 diagnostic categories are limited as well in their application to persons with intellectual disabilities?

Thank you for pointing this out. Yes, several DSM criteria are based on intellectual ability, in particular verbal expression. With severe levels of intellectual disability the utility of DSM becomes very limited.
We now explain this point in the discussion through adding the sentence (Line 398, page 17)
“Also, with severe levels of ID, the utility of different diagnostic criteria used in people with ID becomes very limited because is based on verbal expression.”

2. There are other minor copy editor criticisms. The LSS should be explained in the abstract as it is in the text.

We have explained the LSS register in the abstract (methods section, Line 32, page 1).

3. It would be more elegant to use "affective" and "anxiety" disorders rather than repeating the numerals F3 and F4 in the text.

We have changed F3 and F4 to affective and anxiety through the text.

4. One presumes that the LSS groups excluded from analysis were those with physical disabilities.

Yes, people diagnosed with only physical disability is not included in the study. We elaborated more about that in the methods section about the LSS groups (line 113, page 5).

“The LSS register contains three groups; individuals having intellectual disability, autism or resembling autism (Person group 1); individuals having intellectual disability as a result of permanent brain damage in adulthood (Person group 2); finally, individuals having other physical or mental impairment that is clearly not due to normal aging (Person group 3)”

5. Finally the authors captured a category of "injury" but did not mention suicide attempts or self injury. Are those data available? If not why not?

The information about suicide attempts and self-injury is included in the external causes chapter with (X60-X84) codes in ICD-10. These codes are used in addition to a code from another chapter or classification. As our aim was to investigate co-morbidities, we included only the main diagnoses in our manuscript.

We looked further in our data for external causes for person with affective and anxiety disorders and there were 28 people in general reference group and 23 people with ID group, who have had at least one occurrence of suicide/self-harm (X60-X84) during the study period.
The main causes of self-harm in ID group were as following

- (X60) Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to nonopioid analgesics, antipyretics and antirheumatics (2,1) persons in ID group vs gRef.
- (X61) Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic, antiparkinsonism and psychotropic drugs, not elsewhere classified, (1,5) persons in ID group vs gRef.
- (X64) Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to other and unspecified drugs, medicaments and biological substances, (17,15) persons in ID group vs gRef.
- (X71) Intentional self-harm by drowning and submersion, (1,0) persons in ID group vs gRef.
- (X78) Intentional self-harm by sharp object, (2,2) persons in ID group vs gRef.

6. Language correction before being published.

The manuscript was revised by Springer nature language editing service for a second round.

Angela Hassiotis (Reviewer 2)

1. Interesting paper and the comments have been addressed adequately. However, the manuscript will require proof reading to improve readability. For example, instead of sickness not should be illness or disorder or condition.

The manuscript was revised by Springer nature language editing service for a second round.

Sincerely, on behalf of all authors,

Nadia El Mrayyan