

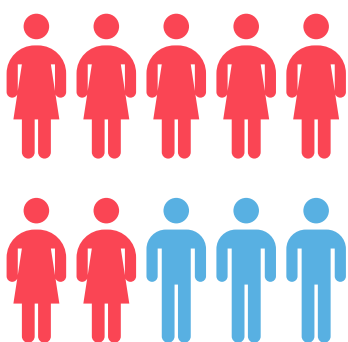
# NCI-AD Data Spotlight on Older Adults and Mental Health

## NCI-AD DATA SPOTLIGHT

May is Older Americans Month and Mental Health Awareness Month. This NCI-AD Spotlight sheds light on the impact of mental health on older adults. Older adults experience greater inequality related to social and economic factors, that in turn can affect mental health.<sup>1</sup> About 12% of adults aged 65 or older report that they “rarely” or “never” receive the social and emotional support they needed.<sup>2</sup>

*Note: These data were collected before COVID-19.*

### In 2018 - 2019, what did National Core Indicators - Aging and Disabilities Tell Us?<sup>3</sup>



Among those who reported they have a mental health diagnosis

**73%**

were female.

**74**

Average age of those who reported a mental health diagnosis

**<**

**77**

Average age of those who **did not** report a mental health diagnosis

A higher proportion of white respondents reported having a mental health diagnosis, while a lower proportion of black respondents reported a diagnosis.



*\*These data come from the 16 states that participated in the 2018–19 NCI-AD™ Adult Consumer Survey. Analysis includes people 65 and older who responded to the question “Do you have a chronic psychiatric or a mental health diagnosis, such as bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, or major depressive disorder?” Data include a total of 6,639 respondents. Comparisons are significant at .01.*

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Those with a mental health diagnosis reported poorer experiences with paid staff:



**71% v 80%**

WITH  
DIAGNOSIS

WITHOUT  
DIAGNOSIS

report that they feel safe  
around paid support staff.



**84% v 92%**

WITH  
DIAGNOSIS

WITHOUT  
DIAGNOSIS

report that staff  
always treat them with  
respect.



**41% v 34%**

WITH  
DIAGNOSIS

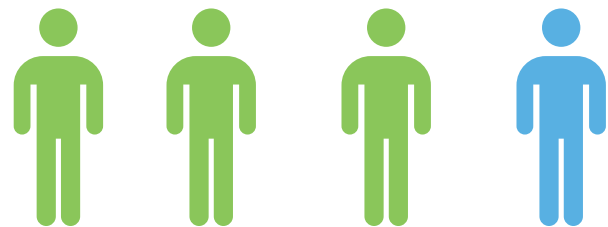
WITHOUT  
DIAGNOSIS

report that staff change too  
often.

Only two-thirds of people with a mental health diagnosis reported that the services and supports they receive meet all of their needs and goals compared to three-quarters of those without a mental health diagnosis.



WITH DIAGNOSIS

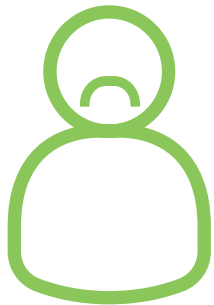


WITHOUT DIAGNOSIS

NCI-AD DATA SPOTLIGHT

Loneliness is a major risk factor for physical and mental illness in later life. Conversely, people who engage in meaningful, productive activities with others tend to live longer, are happier, and have a sense of purpose.<sup>4,5</sup>

**Respondents to the ACS with a mental health diagnosis were more likely than those without to report that they:**



**27% v 6%**

WITH DIAGNOSIS      WITHOUT DIAGNOSIS

often feel sad or depressed



**81% v 56%**

WITH DIAGNOSIS      WITHOUT DIAGNOSIS

have someone to talk to when they feel sad or depressed



want to work and/or volunteer

Respondents with a mental health diagnosis were **less likely** than those without to report they have family and friends (they do not live with) involved in their life and were less satisfied with how much they access their community.



### References

1. World Health Organization and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (2014). Social determinants of mental health. Geneva, World Health Organization.
2. McGuire LC, Strine TW, Okoro CA, Ahluwalia IB, Ford ES. Modifiable characteristics of a healthy lifestyle in U.S. older adults with or without frequent mental distress: 2003 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. *Am J Geriatr Psychiatry*. 2007;15:754-761.
3. Data come from 2018-19 National Core Indicators – Aging and Disabilities® Adult Consumer Survey, analysis includes people 65 and older who responded to the question “Do you have a chronic psychiatric or a mental health diagnosis, such as bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, or major depressive disorder?” Data include a total of 6,639 respondents.
4. Loneliness and Social Isolation as Risk Factors for Mortality: A Meta-Analytic Review, *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 2015, Vol. 10(2) 227 –237)
5. Cacioppo S, Grippo AJ, London S, Goossens L, Cacioppo JT. Loneliness: clinical import and interventions. *Perspect Psychol Sci*. 2015 Mar;10(2):238-49