

# Person-related Work and Incident Use of Antidepressants

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Working "with people" (person-related work) has previously been related to hospitalisation with depression. We aimed to replicate this finding, applying a different measure of depression; use of antidepressants.

Furthermore, we examined if the association was mediated by exposure to emotional demands, demands for hiding emotions, threats, and/or violence.

**RESULTS** Using non-person-related work as reference, odds of incident use of antidepressants were increased by 60% for health workers ( $p=0.01$ ), and 40% for educational workers ( $p=0.09$ ). No increase was seen for social workers or customer-service workers.

Effects were mediated by emotional demands. Demands for hiding emotions, threats, or violence, did not independently mediate effects.

**DISCUSSION** Respondents doing certain types of person-related work were more likely to start using antidepressants, substantiating an association between these types of work and depression. Results could be biased by treatment-seeking behaviours, and/or residual confounding. However, considering the mediating effect of emotional demands, bias is unlikely to fully explain results.

**METHODS** We linked the Danish Work Environment Cohort Study (DWECS) (year 2000) with the Register of Medicinal Products Statistics, obtaining information about all antidepressants purchased at Danish pharmacies.

We included 5087 employees, after excluding respondents purchasing antidepressants within 12 months before follow-up. Follow up was 5 years.

We conducted logistic regressions, adjusting for gender, age, cohabitation, and socioeconomic position. Mediation was assessed by attenuation of risks, when adjusting for potential mediators.



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