

Team climate at work associated with mental health in the Health 2000 Study in Finland

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Introduction

Depressive disorders

- Significant contributors to work disability and premature exit from the labour market
- Antidepressant use in Finland increased 7-fold from 1990 to 2005

Introduction

- Team climate is assumed to protect mental health
- This study examined the association between poor team climate at work, mental health, and subsequent antidepressant medication

Methods

- A cohort of 3347 employees
- A population-based health survey
- Team climate at work: Self-assessment questionnaire (the Healthy Organization Questionnaire of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health)
- DSM-IV diagnoses of depressive, anxiety, and alcohol use disorders based CIDI
- Purchases of antidepressants from the nationwide pharmaceutical register of the Social Insurance Institution

Methods

- Adjustments for age, gender, marital status, occupational grade, lifetime mental disorders, job tenure, job control and job demands
- Adjusted odds ratios (OR) and their 95% confidence intervals (CI) for DSM-IV diagnoses and having at least one purchase of antidepressants during the 3-yr follow-up

Results

Associations with mental disorders

Poor team climate and depressive disorders

- OR 1.61; 95% CI 1.10-2.36 (p=0.002)

Poor team climate and anxiety disorders

- OR 1.26; 95% CI 0.76-2.08 (p=0.38)

Poor team climate and alcohol use disorders

- OR 1.06; 95% CI 0.70-1.62 (p=0.56)

Results

Associations between poor team climate and antidepressant use

–OR 1.53; 95% CI 1.02-2.30 ($p=0.027$)

Results

Antidepressants, 3-yr follow-up

- 11% of women and 6% of men
- No interaction with gender in the association between team climate at work and antidepressant use

Strengths of the study

- Representative sample – generalization to the Finnish workforce 30+ yrs
- High participation rate (87% - 84%)
- Longitudinal study
- Register data on antidepressant prescriptions

Limitations of the study

- Cross-sectional design of the first part (the association between team climate and DSM-IV mental disorders)
- Purchases of antidepressants as an indicator of mental health problems can result in an underestimation
- Antidepressants are also used in pain

Discussion

GOOD TEAM CLIMATE

- May diminish perceived work load
- Acts as a buffer between work stress and disadvantageous consequences on an employee's health
- Influences attitudes or health attitudes directly

Conclusion

Poor team climate at work is a risk factor for mental disorders treated with antidepressant medication

