

People with mood disorders are more likely to be re-hospitalized

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People with serious mental illness (SMI), such as bipolar and major depressive disorders, have increased mortality and physical illness and use greater health care resources than people without mood disorders.

A new study published in the journal *General Hospital Psychiatry* found that patients were more likely to be hospitalized and re-hospitalized soon after being discharged if they have [mood disorders](#).

Study author Kenn B. Daratha, Ph.D., assistant professor at the Washington State University College of Nursing suggests patients with co-occurring [mental health disorders](#) are less likely to take care of themselves and practice fewer [healthy habits](#). For example people with depression are nearly twice as likely to smoke as people without

depression. Respiratory disease and problems were the most common cause of hospitalization for the study patients with mood disorders.

“We need to find ways where the medical and psychiatric side can work together in order to help the patient take control and manage their disease,” Daratha said.

Patients often have difficulty receiving both the primary and mental health care they need, so certain providers are looking to provide both. Lydia Chwastiak, M.D., associate professor at the University of Washington School of Medicine, said that most government agencies that treat the chronically mentally ill are looking to address this issue.

“They’re attempting to bring medical services into the mental health setting so that primary care and preventive care will be provided to patients who are pretty chronically mentally ill,” Chwastiak said.

Once researchers find what works best, they can expand on those methods. “There’s a lot going on,” she said. “It’s just a fairly new field.”

More information: Daratha, K.B., et al. (2012). Co-occurring mood disorders among hospitalized patients and risk for subsequent medical hospitalization. *General Hospital Psychiatry*.

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