

Bi-polar patients 'undertreated' for common physical health problems

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(Medical Xpress)—Those diagnosed with bi-polar are more likely than the general population to be under-treated for common physical health problems like high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease, according to new research.

The research looked at over 1,750,000 records from within 314 primary care practices in Scotland. The research, led by Dr Daniel Martin, Clinical Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow, identified patients with bi-polar disorder while the remaining acted as a control group.

Compared to the controls, those people with bi-polar disorder were significantly less likely to have no recorded physical health conditions, and were significantly more likely to have one or more physical health conditions including thyroid disorders, chronic kidney disorders, chronic pain, chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder and diabetes.

Perhaps surprisingly, people with bi-polar were less likely to be diagnosed with hypertension or [chronic heart disease](#). However, those who had been diagnosed were less likely to be prescribed medication for their heart issues and less likely to be on more than two types of hypertensive medicine.

Lead Researcher, Dr Daniel Martin said "Our research shows that individuals with bipolar disorder have a wide range of serious physical health conditions but are less likely to have a primary-care record of

these conditions. We also found that people with bipolar disorder may receive treatment for their [medical problems](#) and may be treated less intensively for [heart conditions](#) and [high blood pressure](#). This under-recognition and under-treatment of cardiovascular disease may contribute to substantial [premature death](#) for individuals with a bipolar diagnosis.

Although we do not yet know the precise reasons for this we are clear that better recording of and treatment for medical conditions in bipolar disorder should be a priority for healthcare professionals and researchers alike."

Provided by University of Glasgow

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