

# Childhood trauma linked to early psychosis later in life

March 18 2015

---



Research showing that patients with early psychosis report high rates of childhood trauma has important implications for clinicians, a University of Queensland psychologist has found.

UQ Centre for Clinical Research and Queensland Centre for Mental Health Research psychologist Mr Michael Duhig said more than three-quarters of early psychosis patients reported exposure to [childhood trauma](#), including one or a combination of emotional, physical or sexual abuse or physical neglect.

"Those people with early psychosis who experienced trauma during childhood faced higher levels of depression, anxiety and stress," Mr Duhig said.

"Women who were subjected to emotional and sexual abuse during childhood were also found to have an increased risk of developing psychosis in adulthood.

"Interestingly, exposure to childhood trauma was found to have no impact on an individual's day-to-day functioning at work or socially.

"This may be due to appropriate support being provided to individuals from outpatient services."

Mr Duhig said he and his team gathered data from 106 outpatients who attended four early-psychosis services in South-East Queensland.

"These findings highlight the need for practitioners to inquire into any exposure to childhood trauma during clinical assessments of patients with early psychosis," he said.

"Treating psychological distress needs to be a priority for clinicians, rather than managing only psychotic symptoms.

"Mental health clinicians need to consider the life experiences of people who have psychosis so as to ensure the treatment provided is holistic and provides the best chance of full recovery.

"This may require trauma-informed care in those people with psychosis who have been abused during childhood."

Mr Duhig's findings are published in the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*.

**More information:** "The prevalence and correlates of childhood trauma in patients with early psychosis." *Aust N Z J Psychiatry* 0004867415575379, first published on February 26, 2015 [DOI: 10.1177/0004867415575379](https://doi.org/10.1177/0004867415575379)

Provided by University of Queensland

Citation: Childhood trauma linked to early psychosis later in life (2015, March 18) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-03-childhood-trauma-linked-early-psychosis.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.