

**Title:** Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Canadian adults with physician-diagnosed mental health conditions as a function of social disadvantage: Results from the iCARE study

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**Background:** Heightened symptoms of depression and anxiety have been reported among visible minorities and those with lower incomes during COVID-19. However, few studies have examined other important outcomes among socially disadvantaged adults with pre-existing mental health conditions, including interpersonal conflict, employment/income and access to medical care.

**Objective:** To assess COVID-19 impacts in those with mental health conditions as a function of social disadvantage.

**Methods:** A total of 27,142 Canadians (M age = 48.4; SD 16.87) completed nine cross-sectional online surveys (Nov 2020-Sep 2022) from the iCARE Study, weighted for age, sex and province. Multivariable logistic regression adjusted for covariates was conducted for those categorized as socially disadvantaged (i.e., non-Caucasian,  $\leq$  high school education, household income of  $<$  \$60,000 CAD), compared those who were not.

**Results:** Those with a mental health condition at the highest level of social disadvantage compared to those at lower levels were more likely to report psychological distress [aOR (95% CI) = 1.38-1.56 (1.08-1.98)], and interpersonal conflicts [2.42 (1.80-3.25)] ‘to a great extent’. They were more likely to report job loss [2.25 (1.64-3.08)], income reduction [1.63 (1.22-2.19)], difficulty paying for housing [3.17 (2.38-4.21)] and food [2.64 (1.99-3.50)], cancelled medical appointments [1.59 (1.20-2.10)], and reduced access to medical care [1.98 (1.52-2.59)].

**Conclusion:** Results suggest a cumulative effect of multiple risk factors contributing to greater vulnerability to the socioeconomic consequences of COVID-19. Socially disadvantaged Canadians with mental health conditions might benefit from further support should a future crisis arise.

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