Understanding mental health clinical decision-making: A clinical vignette study

Lauren Burns

Swansea University Medical School, UK

Abstract

Some mental health diagnoses such as Bulimia Nervosa, Anxiety Disorder, and Bipolar Disorder are seen more often in patients with certain demographics. However, patient factors such as gender, age and socioeconomic status are shown to unintentionally influence diagnostic, treatment and referral decisions. Therefore, using fictitious case studies (co-produced by medical practitioners) it was tested to see whether by only changing the patient factor can differences in clinical decision-making be seen.

Methods/Approach: Participants were General Practitioners, as they are many people's first choice when seeking mental health support and are heavily involved in patients' mental health care. Participants were exposed to three clinical cases (one depicting Bulimia Nervosa, one Anxiety Disorder, and another Bipolar Disorder). However, participants were randomly allocated to condition 1, condition 2 or the control version of the clinical case for each disorder. Condition 1 and 2 would be the patient demographic; for Bulimia Nervosa the demographic was sex (male versus female), Anxiety Disorder was age (young versus old), and Bipolar Disorder was paired with socioeconomic status (high versus low).

Results: The differences between treatment, diagnostic and referral decisions based on patient demographics will be presented and discussed. The methodological challenges and benefits of using clinical vignettes (case studies) to explore decision-making in mental health will also be discussed.

Conclusion: The results of this project will be used to; better understand the rationale behind clinical decisions, identify where inconsistencies between decisions lie, and assist Clinicians to make better informed mental health-related decisions.

Biography:

Lauren Burns is a current research assistant and PhD student within Population Data Science in the medical school. Her background is in Psychology and Research Methods. She currently holds a Distinction in her Masters' degree in Research Methods in Psychology and Cognitive Neuroscience, as well as a first-class honours in BSc, Psychology. Lauren is passionate about mental health and it is this passion which drove her to undertake her PhD.

Speaker Publications:

1 Burns, L., Sergio Da Silva, A., & John, A. (n.d.) Shared decision-making preferences in mental health: does age matter? A systematic review. *Journal of Mental Health*, 1-12.

2. Lifestyles and mindsets of Olympic, Paralympic and world champions: is an integrated approach the key to elite performance?

3. Generalized Anxiety Disorder in Very Young Children: First Case Reports on Stability and Developmental Considerations.

4. Factors influencing speech perception in noise for 5-year-old children using hearing aids or cochlear implants.

5. Aided cortical response, speech intelligibility, consonant perception and functional performance of young children using conventional amplification or nonlinear frequency compression.

32nd International Conference on Psychiatry and Mental Health; Brisbane, Australia- June 22-23, 2020.

Abstract Citation:

Lauren Burns, Understanding mental health clinical decision-making: A clinical vignette study, Psychiatry Mental health 2020, 32nd International Conference on Psychiatry and Mental health ; Brisbane, Australia- June 22-23, 2020