

# Psychological Medicine

MONOGRAPH SUPPLEMENT 9

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Minor psychiatric morbidity and  
general practice consultations:  
the West London Survey  
P. Williams, A. Tarnopolsky,  
D. Hand and M. Shepherd

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Cambridge University Press

# Minor psychiatric morbidity and general practice consultation

It is now well-established that the bulk of the psychiatric morbidity that exists in the community is managed not by psychiatrists, but in primary medical care settings. This observation emphasizes the importance of studying the relationship between psychiatric morbidity and general practitioner consultation, and factors which influence this relationship.

This is the topic of the present monograph. The literature review brings together work from three research traditions – empirical psychiatric epidemiology, the social structural perspective, and social psychology – which has focused on the influence of psychiatric morbidity on health service use (with special reference to its influence on consultations with general practitioners).

The study demonstrates that the presence of minor psychiatric morbidity doubles the probability of consulting, and that about one-fifth of consultations could be attributed to it. The influence was also studied of a variety of predisposing and health-related factors on the relationship between minor psychiatric morbidity and general practitioner consultations. As expected, the health-related factors exerted much more influence on consulting than did the predisposing (sociodemographic) factors: however, there were complex interactions between them. In particular, sex, socioeconomic status and minor psychiatric morbidity interacted in their influence on general practice consultations.

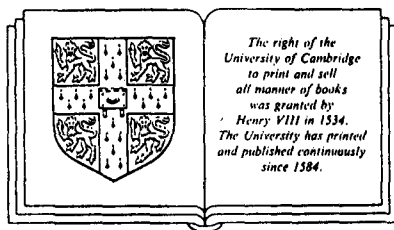
This monograph also provides an illustration of the usefulness and potential of secondary analysis of survey data.

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## CONTENTS

Synopsis	<i>page</i> 1
Introduction	3
The pathway to psychiatric care	3
Psychiatric morbidity in the community and general practitioner consultation	4
The influence of sociodemographic factors on the relationship between psychiatric morbidity and general practitioner consultation: descriptive studies	8
A structural approach to health service use: Andersen's model	10
Large-scale multivariate studies of Andersen's structural model for health service utilization	12
Mechanic's sociopsychological model of illness behaviour	13
Sociodemographic variables, morbidity and health service use: a sociopsychological approach	14
A synthesis of the structural and sociopsychological models	15
Aims of the study	15
Method	16
The data	16
Variables used in the analyses	17
Analysis	18
Results	19
Characteristics of the sample	19
The extent of minor psychiatric morbidity in the community	19
Minor psychiatric morbidity and general practitioner consultation	20
Minor psychiatric morbidity, sociodemographic factors, health-related variables and general practitioner consultation	21
Multi-factor analyses	25
Discussion	29
Minor psychiatric morbidity and general practitioner consultation	30
Sociodemographic variables, minor psychiatric morbidity and general practitioner consultation	30
Health-related variables, minor psychiatric morbidity and general practitioner consultation	32
Conclusions	34
List of tables	35
References	36

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