



Job Security, Inequality and Mental Illness QSD on 4 July 2019

This briefing identifies relevant reports and useful documents, including recent parliamentary materials and press articles, which may be of assistance to Members in preparing for the following debate:

Lord Bird to ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the role of job security and reducing inequality in tackling the prevalence of mental illness.

Copies of the materials are available for collection from the Library.

Key Information

- NHS England, [The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health](#), February 2016, pp 3 and 16–17; and [The NHS Long Term Plan](#), 7 January 2019, pp 68–73

Excerpts from documents discussing mental health services provision. The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health is a report from an independent taskforce. It states that mental health problems disproportionately affect people living in poverty, the unemployed and those who already face discrimination. It says that the NHS must play a greater role in helping those with mental health problems to find and keep a job, including a doubling of access to individual placement and support programmes. The NHS Long Term Plan outlines the Government's commitment to expand adult mental healthcare.

- Department for Work and Pensions and Department of Health and Social Care, [Improving Lives: The Future of Work, Health and Disability](#), 30 November 2017, Cm 9526, pp 5–15, 39–41 and 73–81.

Extracts from a Government white paper outlining measures to increase employment amongst disabled people. It states that mental health problems are one of the two main disabilities affecting participation in work, and that services for those with these illnesses are therefore a “key part of the programme”. The white paper also includes a response to the Stevenson/Farmer Review of Mental Health and Employers.

- Iris Elliott, [Poverty and Mental Health](#), Mental Health Foundation, August 2016, pp 4–6

Executive summary of a report investigating the effects of poverty on mental health. The report explores the impact of the social, economic and physical environments in which people live, including inequality. It also considers the effect of “adverse experiences”, such as redundancy, on mental health. It recommends ensuring that those with mental health problems benefit from employment support programmes such as Access to Work, and that they can access local opportunities for lifelong learning.

- Business in the Community, [Mental Health at Work 2018 Report: Seizing the Momentum](#), October 2018, pp 29–31

Extracts from the results of a survey of mental health in the workplace. It finds that “66% of employees say that their mental health and wellbeing is affected by their personal job security”. The survey reports that those with lower incomes are more likely to report having a mental health issue. Discussing the interaction between wellbeing and inequality, it suggests that women, younger people, those from the LGBT+ population and those from ethnic minorities report worse than average mental health.

- Public Health England, [‘Better Mental Health: Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Toolkit: Understanding Place’](#), 30 August 2017, section 6

Extract from Public Health England’s toolkit to aid understanding of mental health and wellbeing at a local level. It states that “stable and rewarding employment is a protective factor for mental health [...] Unemployment and unstable employment are risk factors for mental health problems”.

- Robert Joyce and Xiaowei Xu, [Inequalities in the Twenty-first Century: Introducing the IFS Deaton Review](#), Institute for Fiscal Studies, May 2019, p 14

Extract from a paper published at the launch of a new five-year review of inequalities. It states that “inequalities in different dimensions—income, work, mental and physical health, families and relationships—are likely to reinforce one another. The paper also reports statistics which suggest that 43% of people with mental health problems are in employment, compared to 74% of the total population.

Parliamentary Debate, Statements and Questions

- House of Commons, [‘Written Question: Employment: Mental Health’](#), 24 June 2019, 264730
- House of Lords, [‘Written Question: Employment: Disability’](#), 30 May 2019, HL15813
- House of Commons, [‘Written Question: Employment: Mental Illness’](#), 9 May 2019, 247773
- House of Commons, [‘Written Question: Redundancy: Mental Health’](#), 5 September 2018, 167852

Press Articles and Comment

- Mental Health Foundation, [‘Mental Health Statistics: Poverty’](#); and [‘Mental Health Statistics: Mental Health at Work’](#), accessed 27 June 2019
- Mark Rice-Oxley, [‘Austerity and Inequality Fuelling Mental Illness, Says Top UN Envoy’](#), *Guardian*, 24 June 2019
- Nicola Davis, [‘Just One Day of Work a Week Improves Mental Health, Study Suggests’](#), *Guardian*, 19 June 2019
- Mark Rice-Oxley, [‘Prevention: The New Holy Grail of Treating Mental Illness’](#), *Guardian*, 8 June 2019
- Ryan Bourne, [‘Jeremy Corbyn’s Narrow Focus on Solving Inequality Misses the Point’](#), *Telegraph* (£), 17 May 2019
- Gillian Tett, [‘How Income Inequality Affects Our Mental Health’](#), *Financial Times* (£), 27 February 2019

Further Information

- Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Health and Social Care, [Thriving at Work: The Stevenson/Farmer Review of Mental Health and Employers](#), 26 October 2017
- Department of Health and Social Care, '[Government Commits to Reform the Mental Health Act](#)', 6 December 2018
- Nicolas Sommet et al, '[Income Inequality Affects the Psychological Health of Only the People Facing Scarcity](#)', *Psychological Science*, 12 October 2018, vol 29 no 12, pp 1911–21.
- Hans de Witte et al, '[Review of 30 Years of Longitudinal Studies on the Association Between Job Insecurity and Health and Wellbeing: Is There Causal Evidence?](#)', *Australian Psychologist*, 20 January 2016, vol 51 no 1, pp 18–31
- House of Commons Library, [People With Disabilities In Employment](#), 17 May 2019, pp 8 and 15
- Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Inner Level: How More Equal Societies Reduce Stress, Restore Sanity and Improve Everybody's Well-being*, 2018 (available from the Library)

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