

An Assessment of Accessing Mental Health Treatment Among Aging Incarcerated Persons

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Background

- “Graying” of prison population
- Older incarcerated persons are more likely to experience high rates of depression and anxiety compared to their community counterparts.
- However, little research has been done on the psychological distress symptoms and treatment rates of incarcerated persons by age.
- This information would help prisons better treat the aging incarcerated population’s psychological distress symptoms.

Research Question

To what degree does age affect currently accessing mental health treatment among incarcerated persons in state prisons who have previously received support, while controlling for demographics?

Data

Data comes from the Survey of Prison Inmates, 2016. State respondents to the survey were chosen for the sample if they had accessed treatment at some point during their current incarceration ($n=5,885$).

Results

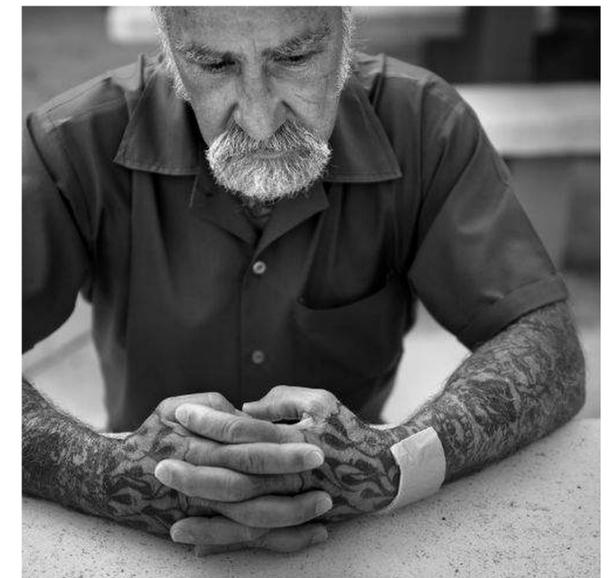
Binary Logistic Regression DV: Current Treatment Access ($n = 5,484$)

Variables	Odds Ratio
Age*	1.012
Years Incarcerated*	0.922
Prior Diagnosis*	1.438
Substance Use Treatment	1.033
Male*	0.610
Prior Hospitalization*	1.225
Prescription at Arrest*	1.647
Black ¹	1.159
Latino ¹	1.197
Multiracial/Other ¹	1.020

* $p < .05$, ¹White is the reference category

Discussion

- Of those who had accessed treatment during this prison sentence, older incarcerated persons were more likely to be currently accessing treatment than younger incarcerated individuals.
- However, in this group, those who had been incarcerated longer, were less likely to be currently accessing treatment, meaning incarcerated persons were likely to access treatment when they first enter and then discontinue the longer they stay.
- How do we serve aging incarcerated persons who have been incarcerated long term, and those who have symptoms but are not accessing treatment?



Full Tables and Information on Second RQ