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AN OVERVIEW OF THE NHS CHECK STUDY RESULTS: SUICIDAL THOUGHTS AND BEHAVIOURS, SICKNESS ABSENCE AND INTENTION TO LEAVE, AND THE TRAJECTORY OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS IN HEALTHCARE WORKERS

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Background:

The NHS CHECK study was set up in April 2020 to track the mental health of NHS workers through the COVID-19 pandemic. The need to understand if and, if so, how healthcare workers (HCWs) were coping with the additional pressures of the pandemic came on top of a decade of increasing patient numbers and levels of need, and reduced real-terms funding.

Aims:

This talk will give an overview of some key results from the ongoing NHS CHECK study.

Methods:

The NHS CHECK study used online surveys to collect data from HCWs working in 18 participating NHS Trusts in England. HCWs were recruited via centrally distributed emails from HR, Trust CEOs, and team managers, and adverts on posters, leaflets, and screensavers on Trust computers. Participants completed a survey at baseline, then 6, 12, and 34 months later. The survey included questions about demographic and occupational factors, as well as mental health measures (depression, anxiety, PTSD, etc.).

Results:

Over 23,000 HCWs participated at baseline (overall response rate: 15%). The retention rate was ~50% at 6 and 12 months, and 34 month data collection is ongoing. We will present findings from analyses of longitudinal data on the trajectory of mental health over time (general psychological health, depression, anxiety, PTSD), the prevalence and incidence of suicidal and self-harm thoughts and behaviours, and the occupational factors associated with sickness absence and intention to leave.

Conclusions:

NHS CHECK is the largest longitudinal cohort study of the mental health of all types of HCWs in England.