

Risk of people with mental illnesses dying by homicide

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Crump and colleagues (doi:10.1136/bmj.f557) report on an important topic that has received little attention in the health sciences literature: the risk that people with mental illness will die by homicide. This contrasts with the large body of published evidence on the risk of homicide and other acts of serious violence perpetrated by people with psychiatric disorders. Popular media reporting portrays mental illness as posing a threat to the safety of others, and these continual stigmatising portrayals may make the violent victimisation of an already marginalised section of society more likely. These new research findings therefore deserve to be disseminated widely, so that professional groups and agencies working in mental health, as well as the media and general public, are aware that mentally ill people are at increased risk of becoming victims of someone else's violence.