

**Title:** Age and Income Relate to Depression

**Author:** Grace Udah

**Background/Purpose:** West Virginia has one of the lowest mean incomes in the nation. Rates of depression are also high in West Virginia (Muntaner & Barnett, 2000). We sought to examine the relation between age, income, and depression among older adults in West Virginia.

**Methods:** Using data from the 2020 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in West Virginia, we conducted a logistic regression predicting depression, based on income, and age. A total of 4957 adults ages 18 to 80+ years were included.

**Results:** The overall chi-square was significant  $\chi^2(Df=9, N=4957) = 287.71, p < .001$ , with 74% correctly classified. Age significantly predicted depression, but effects were small. In contrast, the income effect was such that as income decreased, the odds of depression increased. Adults earning less than \$10,000 per year were 4.5 times more likely than those at \$75,000+ to report depression.

**Conclusions:** Understanding place-based mental health disparities is an important public health issue (Muntaner & Barnett, 2000). Given the link among age, income and depression, early identification and treatment of depression could help promote a better quality of life across the life span for rural adults.