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# The Impact of Mental Health on Cancer Preventative Screenings

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**THE IMPACT OF MENTAL HEALTH ON CANCER PREVENTATIVE SCREENINGS**

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**SKMC Class of 2021**

**SI PH Project Abstract**

Among the mental health population of the United States, overall preventative health services, such as cancer screening rates, are remarkably low. Additionally, there is a significant 30% higher mortality rate due to cancer in psychiatric patients. This project established if there are disparities in cancer screening rates between the general population and the mental health population of Southeastern Pennsylvania. The project analyzed and compared the differences in cancer screenings for colorectal, breast, and cervical cancer among those currently diagnosed with a mental condition and the general population. Through p-value and Pearson chi-square statistical analysis of the Community Health Data Base 2014-2015, no significant statistical differences between those with or without a diagnosed mental illness and their cancer screening rates was observed. This project's scope may have been limited by the use of landlines to communicate with survey participants (does not include the homeless population), language barriers, issue of measurement, and lack of a more current survey. When an updated CHDB is released, this project's findings can be used as guidance for future analysis. Variations within the mental health community and cancer screening rates should also be investigated since they may show statistical significance. The literature suggests that at a national level, there are evident health inequities that the mental health community must endure. Therefore, this study opens up the question of how the level of care or access to preventative care among those with a mental health condition differs in Southeastern Pennsylvania.