

Amy McInerney

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Amy McInerney is an Ad Astra funded PhD Candidate at University College Dublin. Her research focuses on the role of health behaviours in mental health comorbidities in people with diabetes. Amy's research delves into the links between mental and physical health, primarily by exploring the role of individual psychological symptoms in interactive systems of behaviour and mood. Amy leads the Smartphone, Behaviour, and Mood study, collecting daily mood and behaviour data from people with diabetes. Amy was a co-founder of the PATH lab at UCD School of Psychology and the PsychoSocial Aspects of Diabetes Early Career Researcher group.

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ABSTRACT SUMMARY

Exploring Mental Health Comorbidity in Diabetes through the Lens of Network Theory: Current Insights and Future Prospects

The network approach to psychopathology has emerged as a fresh, alternative method of understanding mental health and disorders. This approach posits that mental health conditions emerge from the direct connections among individual psychological symptoms, which trigger and influence one another.

People with diabetes are vulnerable to symptoms of diabetes-related distress, depression, and anxiety. These and other mental health symptoms also commonly co-occur in the same person with diabetes. Conceptualising and investigating mental health disorders in people with diabetes as networks of symptoms may provide new insights into the development and maintenance of mental health conditions and comorbidity in this population.

This talk will discuss network theory, network analysis, and how both may be applied to mental health in diabetes. Findings from recent network analysis studies, exploring depression networks and comorbid diabetes-distress, depressive, and anxiety symptom networks, will be presented and discussed. Additionally, the potential for network analysis to highlight individual psychological symptoms which may be of particular importance for people with diabetes and provide new avenues for treatments will be considered.