**Appendix 1- Description of the variables included** (Statistics Canada, 2011).

***Socio-demographic and health characteristics***

Socio-demographic characteristics studied included: sex (female/male); age (15-29; 30-49; 50 + years); marital status (1. Single, never married; 2. widowed, separated, divorced; or 3. married or living common-law); respondent’s highest level of education (1. less than post-secondary graduation or 2. post-secondary graduation); household income quintile (deciles, a derived variable, were transformed to quintiles which were combined as follows:Q1&Q2; Q3; Q4&Q5); immigrant status (yes/no); Aboriginal status (yes/no): geography (urban/rural).

Health characteristics included: number of physical co-morbidities. The number of physical co-morbidities (if any) was determined by asking respondents if they had any of the following conditions diagnosed by a health professional that had lasted or were expected to last six months or longer: asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, arthritis, back problems, Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis, diabetes, epilepsy, heart disease, cancer, stroke, Alzheimer’s or any other dementia. Each disease was counted as one physical co-morbidity and the following three categories were reported: none, 1 or 2, and 3 or more.

***Impact measures***

Impact measures included perceived health, self-rated mental health, level of psychological distress and disability.

Perceived health is an indicator of overall health status. This was measured by asking respondents*“In general, would you say your health is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor*” .Suboptimal health status was defined as having “fair” or “poor” health.

Self-rated mental health was measured by asking respondents*“In general, would you say your mental health is* excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor”. Suboptimal mental health was defined as having “fair” or “poor” mental health.

Level of psychological distress in the past month was determined using the Kessler 6 (K6) instrument. The K6 measures non-specific serious psychological distress and is based on questions about feeling “nervous, hopeless, restless or fidgety, so depressed that nothing can cheer you up, everything was an effort and/or worthless” in the past month (Kessler *et al.* 2003).Scores can range from 0 to 24 and categorized as: *no distress K6<5, moderate (5≤K6<13) and serious mental distress (K6≥13)*(Prochaska *et al.* 2012). Means have also been calculated.

Level of disability in the last 30 days was determined using the WHO disability assessment schedule 2.0 which includes 6 domains of disability: cognition, mobility, self-care, getting along, life activities and participation. The overall score ranges from 0 (no disability) to 100 (full disability). Scoring for this derived variable is based on the recommended "complex scoring" method outlined in the WHODAS 2.0 manual (Usten *et al*. 2010). Categories were as follows: *no disability (0-4), mild disability (5-24), moderate disability (25-49), severe/extreme disability (50+)* (Virués-Ortega *et al*. 2011).

***Health professional consultations, medication use and perceived need for care measures***

Any health professional consultation in the past 12-months for mental health issues: was determined by asking respondents *“During the past 12 months, have you seen, or talked on the telephone to, any of the following people about problems with your emotions, mental health or use of alcohol or drug*?” If they said “yes” to any of the following: “psychiatrist”, “psychologist”, “family doctor or general practitioner”, “nurse” or “social worker, counsellor, or psychotherapist” then they were considered as having consulted any health professional in the past 12-months.

Mental health professional consultation in the past 12-months: if respondents responded “yes” to the above question to either of the following: “psychiatrist” or “psychologist”, they were considered as having consulted a mental health professional in the past 12-months.

Use of at least one mood disorder medication in the past two days: was determined by following up with those respondents who reported taking medication over the past 12 months with questions regarding medications taken in the past two days, specifically: 1. Antiepileptic as a mood stabilizer; 2. Antidepressant including TCA, SSRI, SNRI, bupropion, or other antidepressant; and/or 3. Lithium. When a Drug Identification Number was not available, respondents were asked for the exact name of the medication.

Overall perceived need for mental health care in the past 12-months: was determined by grouping respondents into one of four categories based on whether a need was reported (information, medication, counselling, other), and if so, whether their needs were met, partially met, or unmet.

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