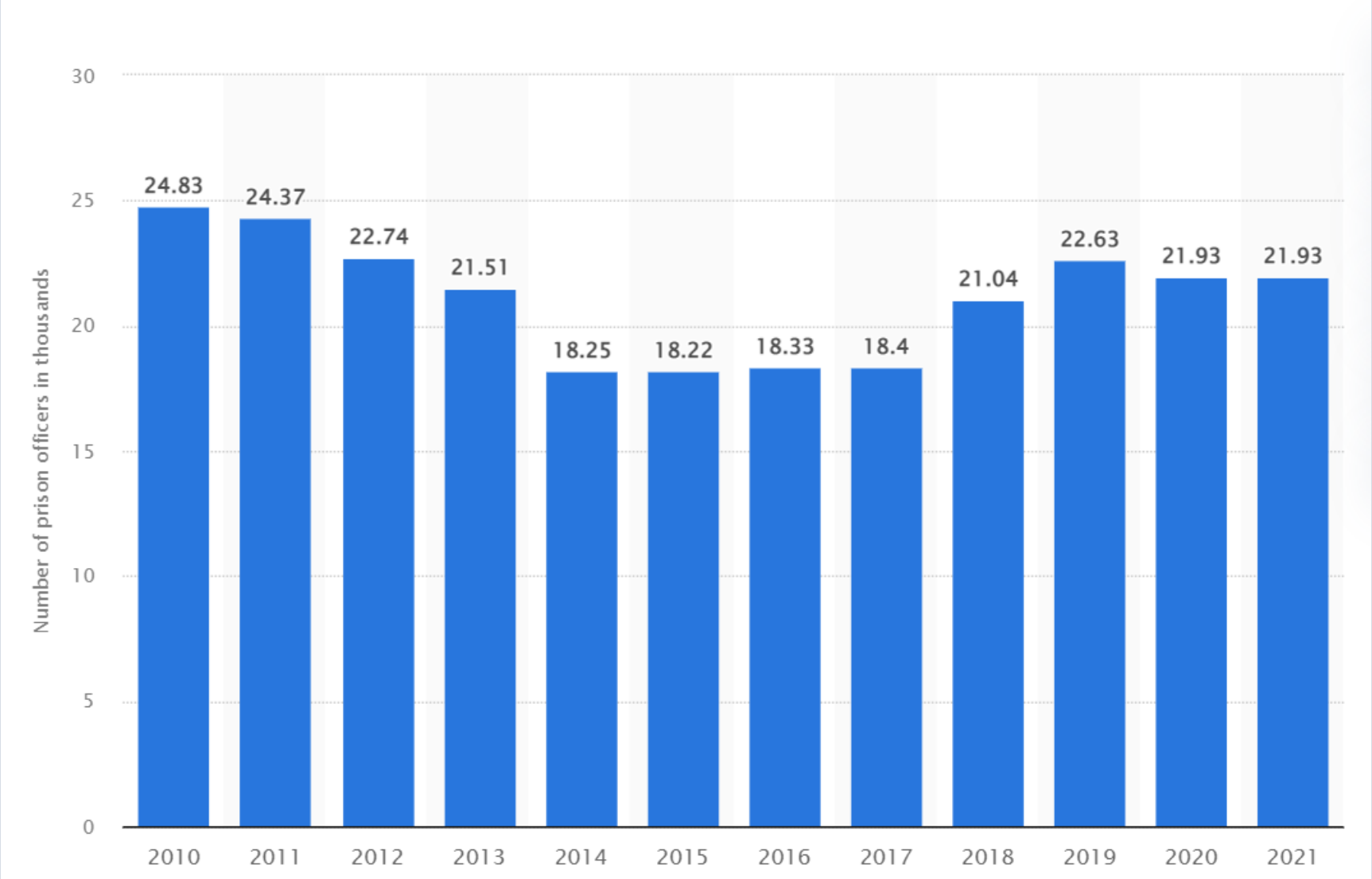


The mental health of prison staff in the UK Biobank: a comparison with the working population

Dr Sharon Stevelink

Senior Lecturer in Epidemiology
NIHR Advanced Fellow

Approx. 22k prison officers in the UK



Exposure to difficult and stressful situations on a daily basis



UK Biobank

Recruitment and data collection



Age 40 – 69 years

First wave of data was collected between 2006-2010

Selection

N=8,767,661 invited to participate based on age and proximity to an assessment centre

Response

N=503,328 participated in baseline assessment

Future contact

N=339,092 agreed to receive email communication

N=156,377 filled in Thoughts and feelings questionnaire

N=120,313 filled in Healthy work Questionnaire

Healthy work questionnaire



- SOC codes
- Number of jobs held
- Year job started/ended
- Gap periods in employment
- Year gap ended/started



- Work hours
- Shift work
- Days/night shifts worked



- Exposure to dust
- Chemicals
- Noise
- Etc

Thoughts and feelings questionnaire

Depression

- Short Form Composite International Diagnostic Interview Depression module (CIDI-SF, lifetime)
- Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ9, current)

Anxiety disorder

- CIDI-SF general Generalised Anxiety Disorder module (lifetime)
- Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD7, current)
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder checklist – Short (PCL-S)

Substance abuse

- Addiction: lifetime and current self-report
- Cannabis use: lifetime and current self-report
- AUDIT (current)

Others

- Adverse events in childhood and adult life; self-harm; wellbeing
- Unusual (psychotic) experiences; mania/hypomania

Mental health problems in prison staff

PTSD

Anxiety

Depression

Alcohol misuse

Compared to

Past and current
prison staff

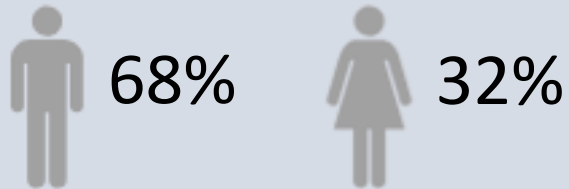
Other participants
who were employed
and matched on
gender

The findings

160 prison staff were identified in the UK Biobank via SOC codes

- 2000 participants, including 160 prison staff

Mean age 56 (SD 7.70)

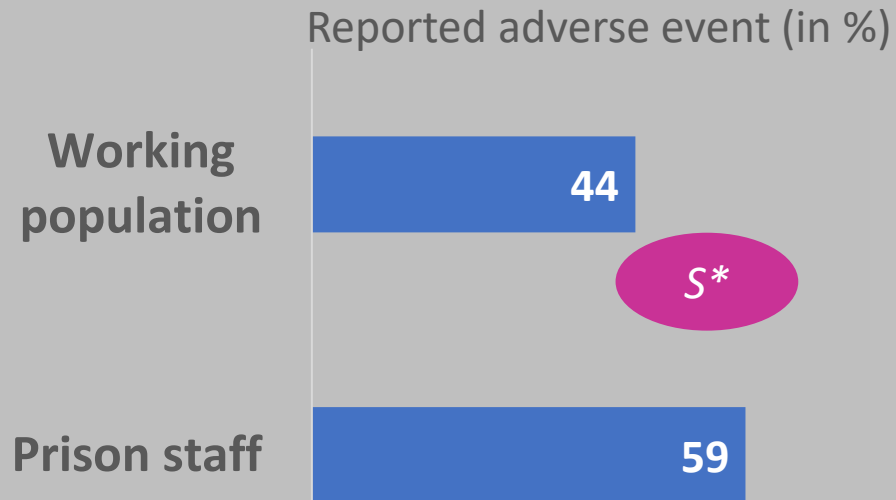


Socio-demographic differences were identified between prison staff and other workers

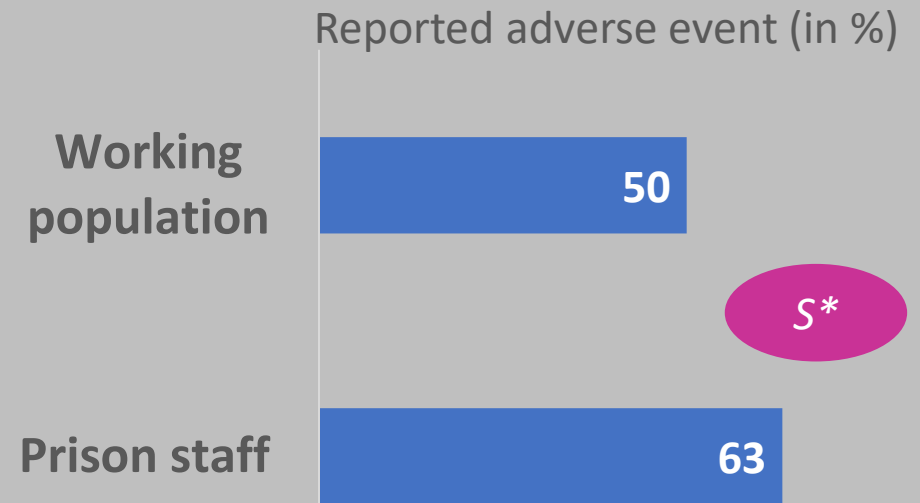
- Age: 54.6 years in prison staff vs 56.5 years in other workers
- Deprivation: prison staff were more likely to live in an area of higher deprivation than other workers
- Highest qualification: prison staff were less likely to have obtained A levels or above compared to other workers (51% vs 71%)
- Smoking status: prisons staff were more likely to have ever smoked than other workers (56% vs. 43%)
- No significant difference in ethnicity (9% vs. 8%)

Prison staff reported more childhood and adult adverse events than other workers

Prison staff were more likely to report childhood adverse events

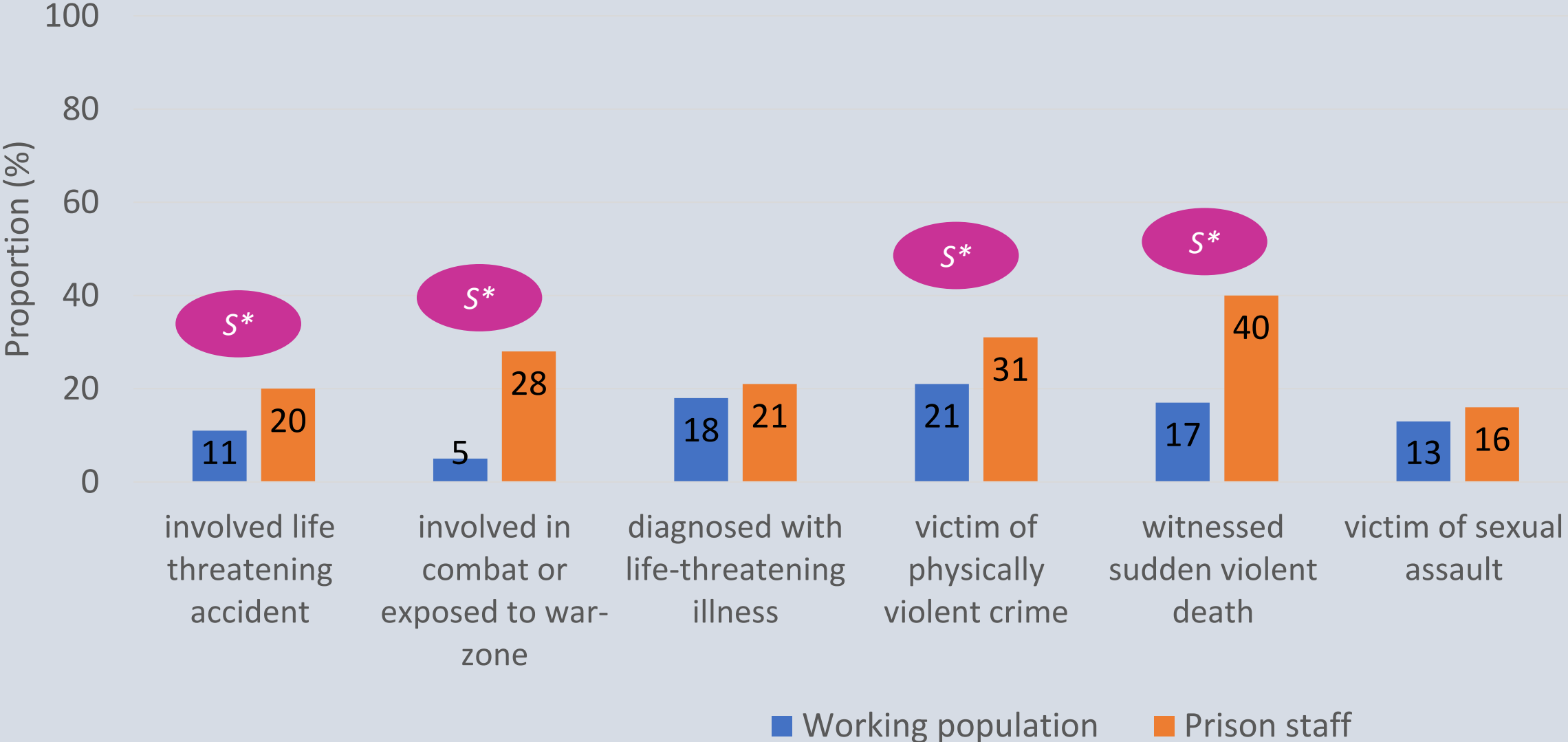


Prison staff were as likely to report adult adverse events



*S: significant

Almost three in four prison staff reported at least one potential traumatic event



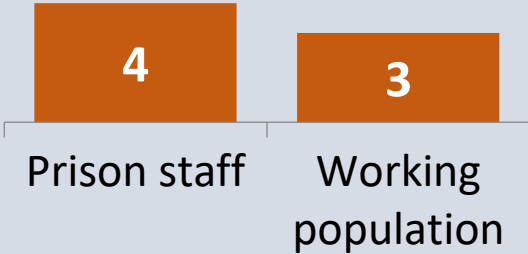
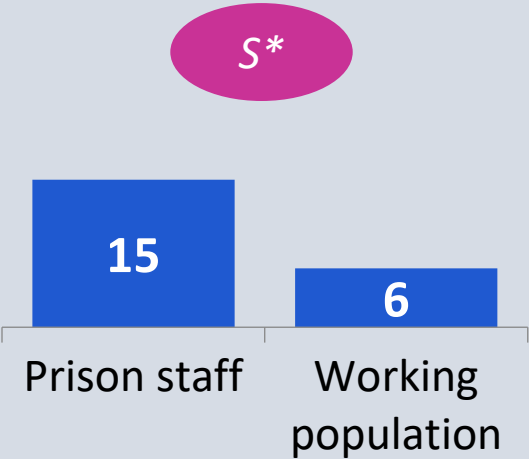
Prison staff reported higher levels of PTSD and depression than other workers

PTSD (%)

Depression (%)

Alcohol misuse (%)

Anxiety (%)



17% of prison staff reported symptoms of a mental health problem compared to 10% of the other workers

Unadjusted logistic regression

1. Adjusted for age, deprivation score, education and smoking
2. Adjusted for above and childhood adversities
3. Adjusted for above and adulthood adversities
4. Adjusted for above and trauma adversities

OR 1.95 (95% CI 1.25-3.03)

AOR1 1.69 (95% CI 1.06-2.71)

AOR2 1.61 (95% CI 1.00-2.60)

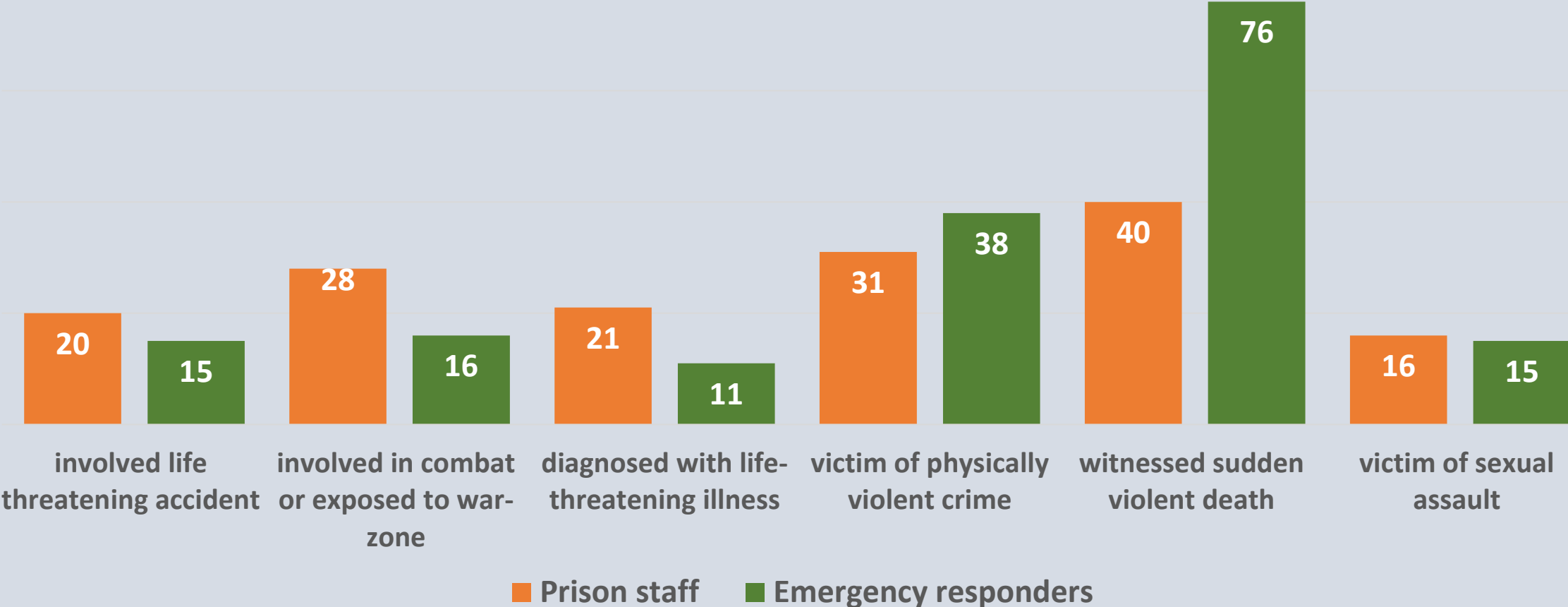
AOR3 1.57 (95% CI 0.97-2.55)

AOR4 1.49 (95% CI 0.91-2.43)

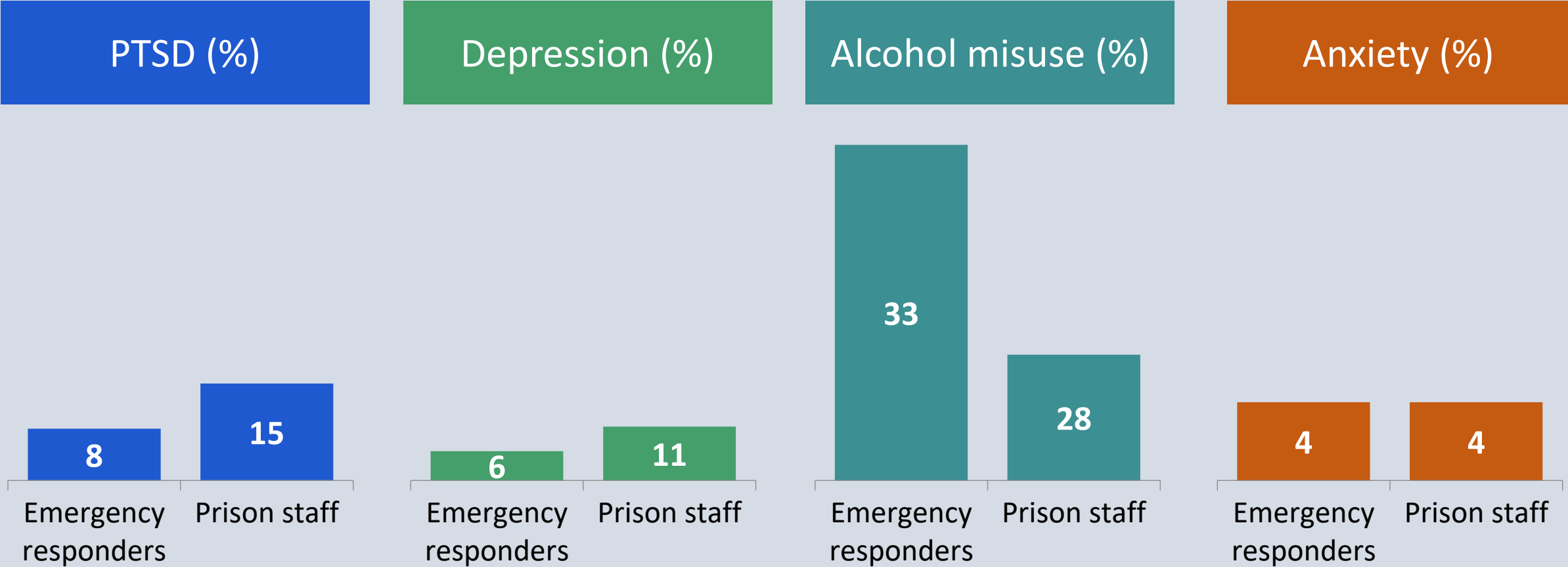
How does this compare to other people working in stressful occupations?



Emergency responders were more likely to have witnessed sudden violent death than prison staff



Prison staff reported higher levels of PTSD than emergency responders



Strengths

- Validated and standardised measures
- Reduced risk of contextual or framing effect due to population survey instead of occupational survey

Limitations

- UK Biobank sample is not representative of the UK population (female, white, higher educated)
- Participants were 40+ years

Summarising

Prison staff were more likely to report symptoms of mental health problems than a sample of gender matched other workers

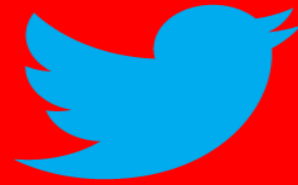


After adjusting for adulthood adversities and traumatic exposures, this was no longer significant

Alcohol misuse is most common followed by PTSD, depression and anxiety

Thank You

Don't forget to tag:



@kcmhr

@KingsCollegeLon

Contact details:

Dr Sharon Stevelink

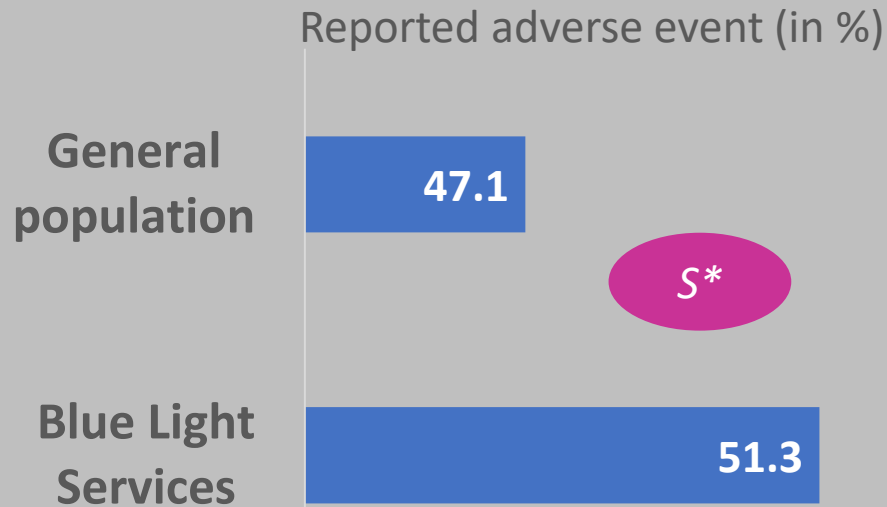
King's Centre for Military Health Research

Department of Psychological Medicine

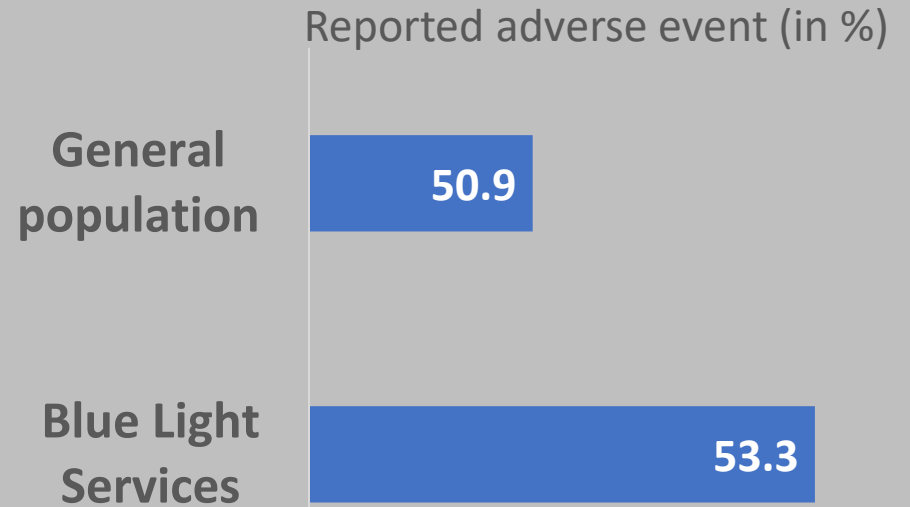
sharon.stevelink@kcl.ac.uk

BLS reported more childhood adverse events than controls

BLS personnel were more likely to report childhood adverse events



BLS personnel were as likely to report adult adverse events



**S: significant*