

Poster Presentations

190 FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH ADHERENCE TO COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES AMONG OLDER ADULTS IN IRELAND

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Background: Older adults are at high risk from coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). Even with the introduction of a widespread vaccination programme, adherence to public health guidelines continue to be of vital importance to reducing the spread of COVID-19. This study examines the factors associated with adherence to two public health guidelines, social distancing and mask wearing, among older adults (50 years and over) in Ireland.

Methods: Data from the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) COVID-19 study and previous waves of TILDA was used. The COVID-19 study data was collected between July 2020 and November 2020. Logistic regression analysis was conducted separately to examine the relationship between the independent variables and social distancing and mask wearing respectively. Along with socio-demographic variables, the Health Belief Model (HBM) was used to identify variables for inclusion in the analysis.

Results: In total, 2,816 participants were included in this study. Females were more likely than males to adhere to social distancing and mask wearing guidelines. Those most concerned about COVID-19 were more likely to adhere to both behaviours. Education levels were associated with adherence to both behaviours but the direction of the relationship differed. Those who trusted the Health Service Executive as a news source were more likely to socially distance, while those with less understanding of government guidance and those who trusted in government news sources were less likely to socially distance. Participants who were working were less likely to socially distance than those who weren't. While, participants who were over 70 and those who returned the survey after the introduction of mandatory mask wearing were more likely to wear a mask. Participants who lived outside of Dublin were less likely to wear a mask.

Conclusion: Factors associated with adherence to public health guidelines vary according to the guideline. Differences between groups need to be considered when implementing policy around public health guidelines.