

Living in deprived area is risk factor for cognitive dysfunction

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(HealthDay)—Area-level deprivation is an independent risk factor for

cognitive dysfunction in older adults, according to a study published in the July issue of the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

Adrian McCann, Ph.D., from Ulster University in the United Kingdom, and colleagues evaluated the relationship between area-level deprivation and risk of [cognitive dysfunction](#) using data from the Trinity, Ulster, and Department of Agriculture study from 2008 to 2012. The study involved 5,186 community-dwelling adults with a mean age of 74 and without dementia. Geo-referenced, address-based information was used to map and link participants to official socioeconomic indicators of deprivation.

The researchers found that approximately one-quarter of the cohort resided within the most deprived districts in the United Kingdom and Ireland. There was an association between greater area-level deprivation and significantly lower Mini-Mental State Examination scores. Greater area-level deprivation was also associated with fewer years of formal education; greater anxiety, depression, smoking, alcohol use, and obesity; higher blood pressure; and diabetes risk. Area deprivation was associated with significantly higher risk of cognitive dysfunction (odds ratio, 1.4 for most versus least deprived) after adjustment for relevant covariates.

"Adults living in areas of greatest socioeconomic [deprivation](#) may benefit from targeted strategies aimed at improving modifiable risk factors for dementia," the authors write.

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