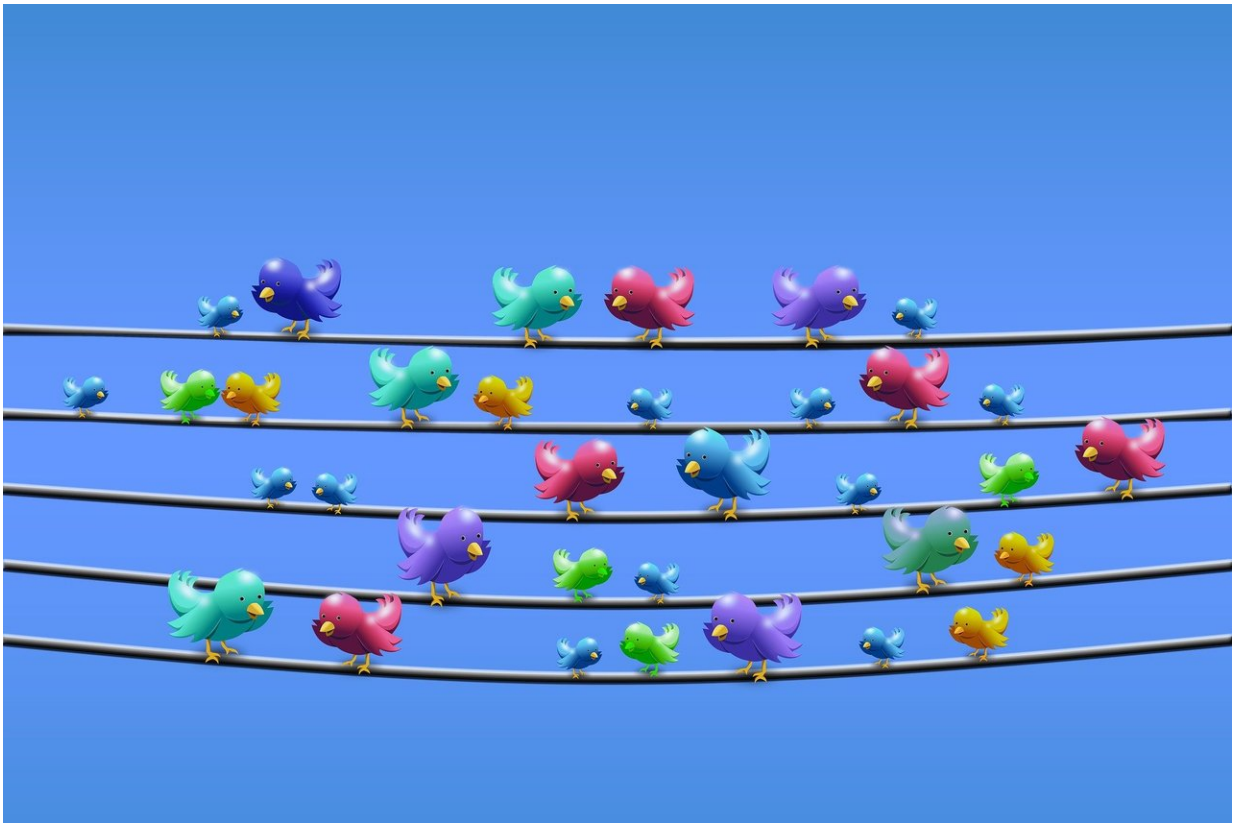


High volumes of mental health-related tweets associated with crisis referrals

February 6 2020



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Referrals to two mental healthcare providers in London for patients requiring urgent help were significantly greater on days with a higher than average number of tweets discussing topics around mental health,

according to a study published in *Scientific Reports*. The study used data collected between January 2010 and December 2014 at South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLAM) and Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust (C&I).

Previous studies have shown that [social media use](#), portrayal of mental illness in the media and public discussions around mental health may be associated with negative mental health outcomes. However, research thus far has primarily focused on high-profile events reported by the news media. Associations with mentions of mental health on [social media](#) have remained understudied.

Robert Stewart and colleagues compared the number of tweets containing keywords associated with two important health disorders—depression and schizophrenia—with recorded referrals for 'crisis episodes' to SLAM and C&I. Between January 2010 and December 2014, 48,691 and 32,689 crisis episodes were recorded by SLAM and C&I, respectively. On days with a higher than average number of tweets mentioning depression, schizophrenia or showing support for either illness, the authors observed 5-15% increases in the number of [mental health](#)-related crisis episodes referred to SLAM or C&I.

More information: Mental health-related conversations on social media and crisis episodes: a time-series regression analysis, *Scientific Reports* (2020). [DOI: 10.1038/s41598-020-57835-9](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-020-57835-9)

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