The Imaginary Healthy Patient

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Anxiety and depression may have serious disabling consequences on health, social and occupational outcomes for people who are unaware of their actual health status and/or whose mental health symptoms remain undiagnosed by physicians. This paper provides the big picture of unrecognized anxious and depressive troubles revealed by a low score of Mental Health Inventory-5 (MHI-5) with the help of tree-based methods, using the 2012 French national representative health and social protection survey (Enquête Santé et Protection Sociale, ESPS) matched with yearly healthcare consumption data from the French Sickness Fund. Compared to people with no latent symptoms who did not declare any depression over the last twelve months, people with unrecognized anxiety or depression are found older, more deprived, more socially disengaged, at higher probability of adverse working conditions and with higher healthcare expenditures backed, in some extent, by chronic conditions other than depression.