Results: Findings indicated five themes: (1) Meaningful Emotional Relations (86%); (2) Intimacy with Partners (68%); (3) New Emotional Connections (61%); (4) Sensory Stimulation (55%); and; (5) Physical Enjoyment (23%). As for the second objective, three main themes emerged from the content analysis: (1) Decreasing Depressive and Anxiety Symptoms (73%); (2) Easing Feelings of Loneliness (68%); and (3) Reducing Mood Swings (43%).

Conclusions: The affective relationship between older adults and their pets was relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic, since it allowed for solidifying affection relationships with their partner and creating new ones. Additionally, it contributed for deepening the affective relationship with themselves, in terms of sensory stimulus, physical touch and physical pleasure. Owning a pet, was important for improvement in mental health symptoms, associated to depression, anxiety, and mood swings.

Keywords: Affective relationship; animal companionship; COVID-19 pandemic; mental health; older adults; pets.

Disclosure of Interest: None Declared

EPP0116

SARS-CoV-2 infection and psychological distress : a prospective sero-survey in southern Switzerland

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Introduction: The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the mental health of the population that, to some extent, may be due to the neurotropism of SARS-CoV-2. However, evidence is extremely sparse on the prospective association between serological evidence of COVID-19 infection and psychological distress.

Objectives: We aimed to explore the prospective association between seropositivity and psychological distress – assessed by symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress – in the general adult population in southern Switzerland. Further, we investigated whether this association varied over time and between pandemic waves.

Methods: We used data from 305 adults who participated in the Corona Immunitas Ticino (CIT) prospective sero-survey cohort study. We tested the association between serologically confirmed SARS-COV-2 infection at baseline (June–December 2020) and depression, anxiety and stress scores as measured by the DASS-21 scale at three time points between December 2020 and March 2021, also taking into account for sociodemographic characteristics (age, gender, education level, presence of chronic diseases, smoking, obesity).

Results: In our sample, 84.3% (mean age of 51.30, SD= ± .93) were never infected. Seropositive participants were significantly younger on average (M=46.90, SD= ±2.00, P= .04). At the first follow-up (see Table 1), seropositive participants had higher rates of mild conditions for depression (OR= .64; P= .014) and anxiety (OR= .50; P= .030), than seronegatives. Overall, after the 6-month follow-up, seropositive participants had significantly lower rates of mild conditions for DASS-21 subscales. In addition, prevalence of mild conditions for depression, anxiety and stress decreased more rapidly over time among infected vs. never infected (see Figure 1). Older age and the presence of chronic diseases were associated with mild anxiety (OR= .97; P= .013; OR=3.47; P= .001) and stress (OR= .96; P= .003; OR= 2.56; P= .010).

Table 1. Associations (Odds Ratios) between seropositive immunological status and mental health between December 2020 and March 2021 in Ticino, southern Switzerland (N=305)

DASS-21 defined mild condition	OR	P value	CI (95%)
Depression	0.641	0.014	0.449 – 0.914
Anxiety	0.502	0.030	0.270 – 0.936
Stress	0.712	0.113	0.468 – 1.083

Note. Generalized estimating equation models results. Co-variates include time, age, gender, chronic diseases, obesity, smoking and education level.

Conclusions: Our results provide new evidence on the association between COVID-19 seropositivity and poor mental health and underline the public health implications of the pandemic because the number of infected individuals largely exceed the 770 million of recorded COVID-19 (symptomatic) cases.

Disclosure of Interest: None Declared

E-mental Health

EPP0118

Differential attrition in randomized controlled trials of digital mental health interventions in the workplace: A systematic review and meta-analysis (EMPOWER H2020 project)

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Introduction: Digital interventions have been found to be successful in preventing occupational mental health concerns, however, they seem to be affected by attrition bias through high attrition rates and differential attrition. Differential attrition arises when the rates