

Living near parks 'benefits mental health'

Huddersfield Daily Examiner · 23 Feb 2023 · 6

LIVING close to parks and water sources may reduce the risk of mental health issues in older people, early research suggests.

A preliminary study presented at the American Academy of Neurology's 75th Annual Meeting suggested people living within half a mile of "green" or "blue" spaces had a 17% lower risk of experiencing serious psychological distress compared with those living further away. Serious psychological distress includes mental health issues that require treatment and have a moderate to severe effect on a person's ability to participate in work and other social situations.

The experts said experiencing chronic serious psychological distress can play a role in mild cognitive impairment as well as dementia. Solmaz Amiri, research assistant professor at Washington State University Elson S Floyd College of Medicine, said: "Our hope is that this study showing better mental health among people living close to parks and water will trigger other studies about how these benefits work and whether this proximity can help prevent or delay mild cognitive impairment and dementia."