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RESEARCH REPORTS

Morbidity is related to a green living environment

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Background: Due to increasing urbanisation people face the prospect of living in environments with few green spaces. There is increasing evidence for a positive relation between green space in people's living environment and self-reported indicators of physical and mental health. This study investigates whether physician assessed morbidity is also related to green space in people's living environment.

Methods: Morbidity data were derived from electronic medical records of 195 general practitioners in 96 Dutch practices, serving a population of 345,143 people. Morbidity was classified by the general practitioners according to the International Classification of Primary Care (ICPC). The percentage of green space within a one kilometre and three kilometre radius around the postal code coordinates was derived from an existing database and was calculated for each household. Multilevel logistic regression analyses were performed controlling for demographic and socio-economic characteristics.

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