

PW01-253 - **PERSONALITY TRAITS, SELF-ESTEEM AND SENSE OF MEANING IN LIFE AS PREDICTORS FOR SUICIDE: THE NORWEGIAN HUNT COHORT**

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**Background:** The role of mental illness in the aetiology of suicide is well-recognised whereas the importance of personality and other enduring psychological characteristics has received relatively little attention in prospective studies.

**Methods:** Prospective cohort study of men and women aged 20+ years who participated in the Nord-Trøndelag Health Study, Norway, in 1984-86 (HUNT 1, n=74,977 ) and 1995-97 (HUNT II, n=66,140). State and trait psychological measures (personality traits, self-esteem and sense of coherence) along with sociodemographic, life style and physical health factors known to influence mental health and suicide risk were self reported by participants. Study members were followed up until 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2004.

**Results:** There were 153 suicides amongst the study members included in the analyses. Traits of neuroticism and conscientiousness (dutifulness) were associated with a modest (30-80%) increased risk of suicide. Low self-esteem (hazard ratio 5.22 95% CI 0.90 to 30.42) and low sense of meaning in life (hazard ratio 4.88 95% CI 1.86 to 12.82) were associated with an increased suicide risk in the fully adjusted models even after controlling for common mental disorder.

**Conclusions:** Our results suggest that simple questions relating to markers of personality, self-esteem and meaningfulness (SOC) might be useful tools in clinical suicide risk assessment. However, findings need replication in future large scale prospective studies.