**Supplementary Table S1. Perceived-stigma index coding summary**

This table summarises the construction of the perceived-stigma index used in the analysis. It describes the response scale, scoring approach, and dichotomisation rule applied. Item wording is available in the study instrument and is not reproduced here.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Component | Specification |
| Construct | Perceived stigma regarding mental illness  (multi-item index) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Response scale | Five-point agreement scale per item  (1=strongly disagree … 5=strongly agree) |
| Scoring | Items summed to a total score; a higher total score indicates greater perceived stigma. |
| Total score range | Depends on the number of items in the instrument (sum of item scores) |
| Dichotomisation | Total score dichotomised in the sample  median into High vs Low perceived stigma |
| Use in models | Binary variable (High vs Low) entered as a  predictor in multivariate logistic regression |
| Notes | As reported in the manuscript, the instrument underwent translation, adaptation, and pilot testing  testing |

