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Assessment of Parental Mental Disorders in the National Children's Study (NCS)

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Introduction:

Parental mental disorders are powerful risk factors for children's behavioral and mental disorders, making it critical to obtain estimates of parental mental disorders in NCS baseline assessments. These disorders are usually clinically assessed and diagnosed using lengthy interview instruments. This study will validate a brief set of mental health screens against the gold-standard Composite International Diagnostic Interview (CIDI).

Methods:

Sample: Up to 1200 English-speaking pregnant women and their male partners, aged >17 with over-sampling of racial and ethnic minorities.

Instruments: A brief 25-minute set of REDCap based screening scales will be administered. Probability sub-samples of 450-600 respondents with or without DSM-IV diagnoses will be selected for clinical reappraisal using the CIDI. Patients without DSM-IV diagnoses but with subsyndromal disorders will be used to optimize the sensitivity and specificity of screening scales.

Diagnostic Assessment: Major depression, bipolar spectrum disorders, generalized anxiety, panic, post-traumatic stress, and substance abuse will be assessed.

Analytic Methods. Kappa statistics, Receiver Operating Curve and regression methods will be used to evaluate concordance between diagnoses from screening scales and the CIDI at the aggregate and individual levels. Sensitivity and specificity will be reported for the cohort and separately for mothers and fathers as well as racial and ethnic minorities.

Significance

This is the largest investigation of the epidemiology of mental disorders in a representative sample of community based pregnant mothers and their male partners. Information will be used to study the importance of parental psychopathology in the emergence of mental disorders in children over 21 years of follow-up of the parents and their children.

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