

## Low Socio-economic Position Increases the Adverse Effect of Negative Life Events On Anxiety and Depression During Pregnancy

T. Verbeek<sup>1</sup>, C.L.H. Bockting<sup>2</sup>, C. Beijers<sup>3</sup>, J.L. Meijer<sup>1</sup>, M. Van Pampus<sup>4</sup>, H. Burger<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Epidemiology, University Medical Centre Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands ; <sup>2</sup>Department of Clinical and Developmental Psychology, University of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands ; <sup>3</sup>Department of Psychiatry, University of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands ; <sup>4</sup>Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Onze Lieve Vrouwe Gasthuis, Amsterdam, Netherlands ; <sup>5</sup>Department of General Practice, University Medical Centre Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands

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**Background.** Prevention, identification, and treatment of maternal psychopathology may be favourable for both mother and child. Both a low socio-economic position (SEP) and adverse life events are considered risk factors for symptoms of anxiety and depression during pregnancy. It is unknown whether the effect of adverse life events is modified by SEP.

**Objective.** To investigate the relationship between symptoms of anxiety and depression in pregnancy and adverse life events, and how this relationship is modified by SEP.

**Methods.** The population based Pregnancy, Anxiety and Depression (PAD) Study is a prospective study in Dutch obstetric care. We assessed symptoms of anxiety and depression in pregnant women, SEP (educational level of mother and partner, work status of mother and partner and family income), and the number of adverse life events, categorised by period in life. The association of the number of adverse life events with anxiety and depression, as well as effect modification by SEP was tested using linear regression analyses.

**Results.** We included 4272 participants. The number of life events and low SEP were independently associated with symptoms of both anxiety and depression during pregnancy. Additionally, we found that aspects of SEP: low maternal educational level, maternal unemployment, and low family income may increase the adverse effect of adverse life events.

**Conclusion.** A low SEP increases the adverse impact of adverse life events. In an early screening for anxiety and depression, the number of adverse life events and more important the above-mentioned aspects of SEP should play a key role.