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**Title:** Diagnostic accuracy and psychometric properties of measures of affective disorders in pregnancy and postpartum

**Background:** Robust methods of assessing perinatal anxiety are essential if services are to identify and treat women with perinatal anxiety. However, there is little evidence on the effectiveness of different methods of assessing perinatal anxiety.

**Aims:** To determine which assessment measures are psychometrically robust and most effective at identifying women with anxiety disorders in pregnancy or after birth.

**Methods:** Prospective longitudinal cohort study of 2245 women who completed measures of anxiety during pregnancy (15 weeks, 22 weeks and 31 weeks) and postpartum (6 weeks). To establish diagnostic accuracy of four assessment measures (Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation-10 [CORE-10], Whooley Questions, Generalised Anxiety Disorder-2/7 [GAD-2/7], Stirling Antenatal Anxiety Scale [SAAS]), clinical interviews were conducted with 407 participants (n=102 at each time point) to establish whether they are currently experiencing an anxiety disorder according to formal diagnostic criteria.

**Results:** The mean age of the sample was 34.2 years, the majority of participants were married or cohabitating (93%), and educated to degree level or higher (72%), whilst 27% were from ethnic minority groups. Almost 20% of the sample (n=128) were diagnosed with a current anxiety disorder. Obsessive compulsive disorder was most frequently diagnosed (8.2%); followed by Generalised Anxiety Disorder (5.7%); agoraphobia (4.7%); panic disorder (4.0%); specific phobia (3.5%); social anxiety (3.2%); and post-traumatic stress disorder (2.5%). Area Under Receiver Operating Characteristic (AUROC) Curves indicated that the Whooley Questions (.702) and GAD-2/7 (.774) showed a fair level of discrimination and the SAAS (.809) and CORE-10 (.821) showed excellent discrimination. Of all measure the SAAS had the best balance of sensitivity (83.5%) and specificity (72.8%) at a cut-off point of 9 or greater.

**Conclusions:** The CORE-10 and SAAS were most effective at identifying perinatal women with anxiety disorders. Health care professionals may want to consider using these measures when assessing anxiety in pregnancy and postpartum.

**300 words**