

# **Patterns of contraceptive use among young Australian women with depression or anxiety: Protocol of a longitudinal analysis**

## **Authors**

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## **Background**

The number of young Australian women with depression and anxiety has increased in recent years. This poses a concern to national rates of unintended pregnancy as women with depression or anxiety may be at greater risk. There is currently limited knowledge on the patterns of contraceptive use among women with these conditions. The proposed study aims to examine rates of contraceptive use, contraceptive methods most commonly used, and use of emergency contraception among young Australian women with depression or anxiety. This study will also explore changes in contraceptive use over time with changes in mental health.

## **Method**

We will use existing longitudinal survey data from the Australian Longitudinal Survey of Women's Health (ALSWH). The ALSWH is an extensive longitudinal study of social, physiological and reproductive factors among Australian women and includes linked data from administrative databases such as Medicare. The proposed study will focus on a cohort of young women born 1989-1995 and aged 18-23 years at survey 1 (N = 17,011). The analyses will examine data from 6 surveys (2013-2018) in this cohort and include linked Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and Medicare Benefits Scheme data to assess mental health care use, contraceptive prescriptions and anti-depressant prescriptions.

## **Results**

Permission has been granted to access the ALSWH data and analyses will be completed in September 2020.

## **Conclusion**

Gaining knowledge on the patterns of contraceptive use among young women with anxiety or depression may help to inform future research and primary care interventions with the goal of providing individually tailored contraceptive counselling strategies that promote appropriate contraceptive choices among this population. Assisting women with depression and anxiety to choose an appropriate contraceptive method may increase compliance and continuation with the chosen method and, consequently reduce rates of unintended pregnancy in this group.

**Disclosure of interest**

The investigator team have no conflicts of interest.