



Maternal ADHD and preterm birth: interpret with care

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A note of caution is advised on the definition of a woman considered to have attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) at some time-point before, during or after pregnancy. In the reported study women were considered to have had an episode of ADHD if they were dispensed a prescription for an ADHD medication (Hesselman et al. *BJOG* 2020;127:1480–87). This will not be as accurate as a clinical diagnosis of the condition. Dispensing medication depends on the women presenting the prescription at a pharmacy, which is not always the case when

mental health issues are prevalent. There is, therefore, a possibility that both groups contain a mixture of women both with and without ADHD. It is likely that some prescriptions were not presented, so statistically it is likely that the number of women with ADHD is underestimated. It should also be noted that, in this cohort of women, medication is only prescribed if other supportive measures have failed, again suggesting an underestimation of true ADHD cases, and that the prescribed medications could be prescribed for other mental health conditions, this

time possibly overestimating ADHD cases. In summary, this is an interesting study and the authors have highlighted the issues relating to the accuracy of the definition of an ADHD case in the Discussion section, readers should consider these limitations when interpreting the results of the study.

Disclosure of interests

None declared. A completed disclosure of interests form is available to view online as supporting information. ■