

Maternal and Child Health Network (MatCHNet) Webinar Series: Policy Evaluations in the Early Years

How can administrative data be used to evaluate policies in the early years?

- The Maternal and Child Health Network warmly invites you to join our lunchtime webinar series, which will showcase existing evaluations of policy in the early years. This will include work in progress as well as completed projects from across the 4 UK nations. Presentations will focus on evaluations of policies using routine and administrative data or secondary analysis of existing data.
- The webinar series is open to anyone with an interest in child and maternal health including academics, policymakers, administrative data controllers, third sector organisations.
- Each webinar will feature a 12-minute presentation followed by 10-15 minutes for questions and discussion.

Please join our lunchtime webinar series (Autumn/Winter 2021):

Thursdays at 12.30pm for 30 minutes on 4 November, 9 December, and 13 January

Webinar 1:

Thursday 4th November at 12.30pm

**Topic: The Teenage Pregnancy
Strategy - evaluating its impact on
teenage pregnancy rates**

Speaker: Andy Baxter

Registration: bit.ly/andybaxter

Webinar 2:

Thursday 9th December at 12.30pm

**Topic: Childhood obesity and the
impact of cuts to local government
investment in Sure Start Children's
Centres**

Speaker: Kate Mason

Registration:

bit.ly/katemasonwebinar

Webinar 3:

Thursday 13th January at 12.30pm

**Topic: Using linkage of administrative
data to evaluate the Family Nurse
Partnership in England**

Speaker: Francesca Cavallaro

Registration: bit.ly/francescacavallaro



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Register on Eventbrite: [bit.ly/andybaxter](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/evaluating-policies-in-the-early-years-series-tickets-16144000000)

Webinar 1:

Thursday 4th November at 12.30pm

**Topic: The Teenage Pregnancy Strategy - evaluating its impact
on teenage pregnancy rates**

Speaker: Andy Baxter



- The Teenage Pregnancy Strategy was launched in England in 1999 with a ten-year goal of halving teenage pregnancy rates.
- Despite initial indications that it was successful in reducing England's teenage pregnancy rates, similar changes were seen across several countries, suggesting falling rates would have occurred in the absence of the strategy.
- Previous research has indicated that not all programmes for reducing teenage pregnancy are successful. Other causes, such as improving contraception technology, adolescent development interventions and promotion of education, may have had greater effects on teenage pregnancy rates.
- Better intervention development can use existing evidence to drive policies and improve the health and wellbeing of adolescents and infants born to teenage mothers.
- Speaker: Dr Andy Baxter recently completed his PhD at the University of Glasgow and has recently begun a role as a postdoctoral researcher within the MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit. He has an interest in the evidence-driven development and evaluation of health interventions, particularly policies and projects to improve the health and wellbeing of families and young people.

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Register on Eventbrite: [bit.ly/katemasonwebinar](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/child-health-policy-evaluations-in-the-early-years-series-tickets-154007000017)

Webinar 2:

Thursday 9th December at 12.30pm

Topic: Childhood obesity and the impact of cuts to local government investment in Sure Start Children's Centres

Speaker: Kate Mason



- Cuts to English local authority budgets over the past decade have forced many councils to substantially reduce spending on Sure Start children's centres. As these centres deliver a wide range of services to support parents and the health and development of young children, reduced spending may have had an impact on child health outcomes, including childhood obesity.
- Results will be presented from a recent study that made use of publicly available data on local authority spending on early years services in England, to examine the impact of recent spending cuts on childhood overweight and obesity.
- We found that cuts to spending on Sure Start Children's Centres after 2010 were associated with increased prevalence of obesity at age 4-5 years, and we estimate that several thousand additional children became overweight or obese compared with the expected number if spending levels had remained at 2010 levels.
- The implications of these findings for childhood obesity, health inequalities, and investment in local government, will be considered in the context of current discussions about 'levelling up' and government strategies to tackle childhood obesity.
- Speaker: Dr Kate Mason is a postdoctoral research associate in the Health Inequalities Policy Research team in the Department of Public Health, Policy and Systems at the University of Liverpool. Her research interests are in social and geographical health inequalities, and applying quantitative methods to understand physical and mental health outcomes. She currently works on a project funded by the NIHR School for Public Health Research, investigating local drivers of child health inequalities, with a focus on the child health impacts of social, economic and welfare policies.

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Register on Eventbrite: [bit.ly/francescacavallaro](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/using-linkage-of-administrative-data-to-evaluate-the-family-nurse-partnership-in-england-tickets-158070001017)

Webinar 3:

Thursday 13th January at 12.30pm

Topic: Using linkage of administrative data to evaluate the Family Nurse Partnership in England

Speaker: Francesca Cavallaro



- Linkage of routinely collected data provides opportunities for real-world evaluations of early years interventions, without the need for expensive randomised trials.
- The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) is an intensive home visiting programme supporting vulnerable young mothers which has been commissioned in >130 local authorities in England.
- A randomised controlled trial of 1,600 families showed evidence of effect on some child development outcomes, but not on child health or maltreatment.
- Our evaluation using linked administrative data includes over 111,000 mothers and their children, enabling us to understand in more detail which families are enrolled in the FNP, and which ones benefit the most from the FNP, helping policy-makers better commission and target early years interventions.
- Speaker: Dr Francesca Cavallaro is a maternal and child health epidemiologist at the UCL Institute of Child Health, with expertise in administrative data linkage and evaluation of healthcare interventions. Her research seeks to improve services for vulnerable families during pregnancy and the early years.