unclear. In England and Wales, 7.6% infants are born before 37 weeks gestation; this is higher (16.2%) among those of South Asian ethnicity. We examined PCHI risk by age 11 years in a prospective UK-wide cohort of children born before UNHS. We tested the hypothesis that lower gestational length is associated with higher PCHI risk after adjusting for NICU/SCBU admission and ethnicity.

Methods PCHI risk (cumulative incidence) was based on parental report of hearing impairment and associated treatment at ages nine months, three, five, seven and 11 years for 19,518 children participating in the Millennium Cohort Study. The association of PCHI (defined by provision of hearing aids/cochlear implants, persisting hearing impairment at final report, and absence of glue ear) with gestational length was investigated using multivariable discrete-time survival analysis, adjusting for NICU/SCBU admission, ethnicity and other confounding factors, and weighting for survey design (Stata: Release 14; StataCorp LP).

Results Parents reported no health problems in the first week of Oxford, Oxford, UK

P9 FATHER INVOLVEMENT AND ATTITUDES IN EARLY CHILDREARING AND DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS IN THE PRE-ADOLESCENT PERIOD IN A UK BIRTH COHORT

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Background Although much of the research on the influence of parenting on child development has emphasised the mother’s role, increasing evidence highlights the important role of fathers in the development, health and well-being of their children. In this study we aimed to investigate the association between father involvement in early childhood and depressive symptoms in the same children in their pre-teenage years.

Methods Data for the study came from the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC) cohort from the southwest of England. The outcome, depressive symptoms, was measured using the short Moods and Feelings Questionnaire (sMFQ) when the children were 9 and 11 years of age. The primary exposure was paternal involvement measured using scores derived from factor analysis of fathers’ report of their participation in, understanding of, and feelings about their child’s early upbringing.

Results Three factors were identified in the factor analysis. Scores on factor 1 measured fathers’ emotional response to the child; scores on factor 2 measured the frequency of fathers’ involvement in domestic and childcare activities; scores on factor 3 measured fathers’ feelings of security in their role as parent and partner. Children of fathers with high scores on factors 1 and 3 had 12% (OR 0.88, 95% CI 0.81–0.97, p=0.009) and 9% (OR 0.91, 95% CI 0.82–1.00, p=0.040) respectively lower adjusted odds of reporting more depressive symptoms at 9 years. There was no evidence of a difference in depressive symptoms associated with factor 1 and factor 3 at 11 years. However, there was weak evidence of a 13% increase in odds of reporting more depressive symptoms associated with 1 unit increase in factor 2 scores at age 9 years (OR 1.13, 95% CI 0.99–1.29, p=0.061) and a 16% increase at 11 years (OR 1.16, 95% CI 1.01–1.34, p=0.040).

Conclusion Positive psychological and emotional aspects of father involvement in children’s early upbringing, but not the quantity of direct involvement in childcare, may protect children against developing symptoms of depression in their pre-teen years.