PIII-17: Neighborhood Characteristics in a Sample of Mothers of Preterm Infants

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Abstract:
Introduction: Preterm birth is influenced by a variety of factors, most of which are not well understood. Mothers who have given birth to one preterm infant are at a much greater risk of delivering early with subsequent pregnancies. There is growing interest in the impact neighborhood characteristics have on health outcomes in general and preterm births in particular. The focus of this secondary analysis was to examine the neighborhood characteristics in a sample of mothers of preterm infants and to examine the relationship of these neighborhood characteristics on maternal and infant outcomes.

Method(s): A secondary analysis was conducted on data collected from 90 mothers during a 3-year study of preterm infant feeding. All data were de-identified. Neighborhood was defined as zip code of residence; zip code characteristics were gathered from the U. S. Census Bureau, years 1999 & 2000, and the Virginia Health Equity Report 2008. This study was approved by the IRB and participants gave informed, written consent.
Results: Zip code areas 230 and 232, demonstrated significant relationships with the maternal variables of diabetes, placenta previa and placenta abruptio and with the infant variables of birth weight, post menstrual age (PMA) at full feeds, and PMA at discharge. Neighborhood characteristics for these zip codes revealed bimodal education (54% with high school diploma or GED, 36% hold a bachelor’s degree); income (10% with incomes less than $10,000, 23% with incomes >$100,000); and poverty (46.4% were families with minor children, 64.6% were female head of households). 53.3% of the mothers lived in one of these zip code areas.

Discussion & Conclusions: The causes of preterm births are sometimes obscure and inconclusive. In this analysis we found significant relationships between neighborhood characteristics as defined by zip code of maternal residence and complications of pregnancy and birth. These findings are consistent with previous research and although not surprising, are provocative enough to bear further scrutiny. The continued search for answers to the dilemma of preterm birth requires a broadened scope to include basic socioeconomic organizations such as neighborhoods which may influence the health of mothers and their infants.

Abstract History:

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No, I (or a member of my immediate family) have not received something of value* from or own stock (or stock options) in a commercial company or institution related directly or indirectly to the subject of my presentation.

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