Income Growth Trajectory For Parents Of Children With Down Syndrome In The United States

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Background

- The non-invasive prenatal screening (NIPT) test, available as of October 2011, allows couples to learn whether their fetus has Down syndrome (DS) as early as 8 weeks of gestation.
- Given the availability of this test, more couples are expected to receive a prenatal DS diagnosis.

Objectives

- To our knowledge, no research has examined the differential impact on income growth trajectory of parents of children with DS as compared to parents of children without any chromosomal conditions.
- Upon receiving a prenatal DS diagnosis, expectant parents must make decisions about their pregnancy options with limited time and information.

Methods

Data

- The database contains administrative claims (medical and pharmacy claims) covered beneficiaries in OptumHealth 1999Q1–2015Q1 and has been cited in many peer-reviewed publications.

Observation Time

- A panel of consecutive years of parents' income information was created.

Selection Criteria

- Parents were selected to be included in the study if they were enrolled in their family insurance plan as a plan subscriber; had an identifiable child (<18 years of age) on their insurance plan; had ≥2 years of consecutive income data; had reasonable income growth over the years included; and had demographic and employment characteristics to use in the matching algorithm.

Matching

- The new non-invasive prenatal screening (NIPS) test, available as of October 2011, allows couples to learn whether their fetus has Down syndrome (DS) as early as 8 weeks of gestation.
- Given the availability of this test, more couples are expected to receive a prenatal DS diagnosis.

Study Objective

- To determine the relative rate of income growth among parents of children with DS differs from that among parents of children without chromosomal conditions.

Results

Baseline Characteristics of Study Participants: Pre-vs. Post-Matching

- Table 1: Baseline Characteristics of Parents in DS Study and Control Panels

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- Table 2: Mean Annual Growth Rate in Incomes Amongst parents of Children with DS and Matched Controls

Discussion

- Parents of children with DS have lower mean annual income growth compared to those of children without chromosomal conditions. This difference was not statistically significant among mothers and fathers when analyzed separately.

Limitations

- All claims data were used for the study, any reliance information or administrative error may have resulted in confounding, selection bias, and/or measurement error.

Conclusions

- Parents of children with DS experienced lower mean annual income growth than parents of children without chromosomal conditions.

References