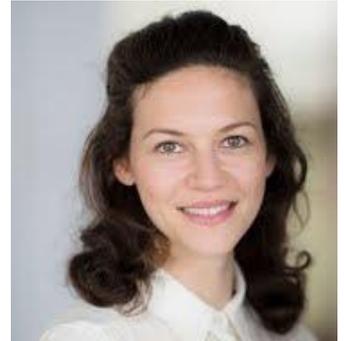


Centre For Health Economics Seminar Series 2016

DOES MENTAL HEALTH AFFECT LABOR MARKET OUTCOMES? EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE FROM A LONG-RUN FOLLOWUP OF AN RCT TREATING MATERNAL DEPRESSION

Presenter: Dr Victoria Baranov, University of Melbourne
Date: Wednesday 24 August 2016
Time: 12.00pm -1.00pm
Venue: RB Scotton Room
Centre for Health Economics



Abstract:

We evaluate the long-term impact of a Randomized Controlled Trial that provided psychotherapy for perinatally depressed mothers in rural Pakistan. This paper presents results from a 7-year follow-up of the Thinking Healthy Programme (THP), which provided Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) based treatment to clinically depressed mothers in their third trimester and lasted through 10 months postpartum. The intervention was successful in the short-term, with a depression recovery rate 78% higher for treated mothers. The 7-year follow-up, successfully re-enrolled 83% of the THP sample. Our results suggest that mental health benefits persist even 6 years after the intervention concluded. At the 7-year follow-up treated mothers were 6 percentage points less likely to be depressed, they report 28% fewer number of depressive episodes in the intermediate period, and they perceive more social support. We find that intervention was especially effective, both in the short run and long run, for the subset of mothers who were identified as more vulnerable based on low social support at baseline. In the long-run, the beneficial effect of CBT appears to be concentrated among mothers who did not have a grandmother living with them or who had low levels of social support at baseline. This suggests that social support provides a buffer effect that enables recovery, for which treatment is a substitute. Finally, we find evidence that the intervention impacted mother's empowerment in the short-run and improved mother's financial autonomy- her labor supply, income, ability to make spending decisions- in the long run. The long-run effects on mother's financial autonomy appear to be driven by the vulnerable subgroup of women who benefitted most from the intervention. (With Sonia Bhalotra and Joanna Maselko)

Presenter:

Victoria is a development economist. Her research is focused on how health, particularly psychological health, relates to poverty. Her current projects explore the effects of mental health on economic decision-making, from investment to labor supply, through experimental techniques using psychological interventions in settings such as Pakistan and Kenya. Another strand of research explores how individuals perceive mortality risk, and how subjective expectations of longevity impact long-term investment, specifically focusing on HIV-related mortality risk and its reduction through the introduction of Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) in sub-Saharan Africa. Victoria received her PhD from the University of Chicago in 2013 and is currently a lecturer in the economics department at the University of Melbourne. She is also a research fellow at the Life Course Centre.

VISITORS ARE MOST WELCOME

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