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## Suggested Reference

Underwood, L., Atatoa Carr, P., Berry, S., Grant, C., Peterson, E., Waldie, K., & Morton, S. (2016). Paternal depression during pregnancy and after childbirth: evidence from Growing Up in New Zealand. Poster session presented at the meeting of 14th Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference. Melbourne.

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# Paternal depression symptoms during pregnancy and after childbirth: Evidence from Growing Up in New Zealand

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## Background & aim

- Much research on perinatal depression focuses on women
- Expectant & new fathers may experience depression too
- Evidence suggests pregnancy & childbirth are high-risk times for fathers as well as for mothers

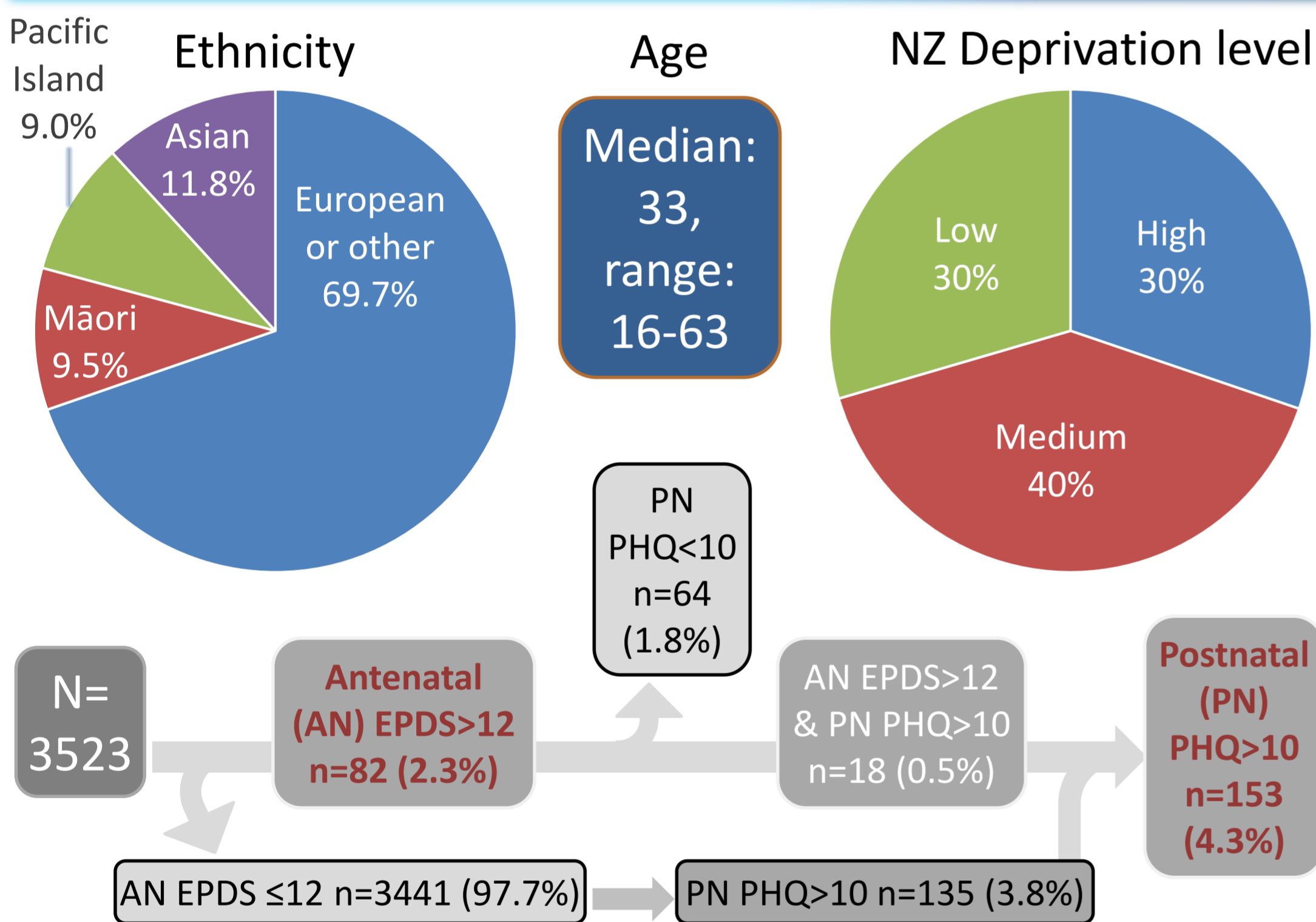
### Aim:

Identify paternal and maternal characteristics associated with elevated depression symptoms among men whose partners were pregnant & subsequently gave birth.

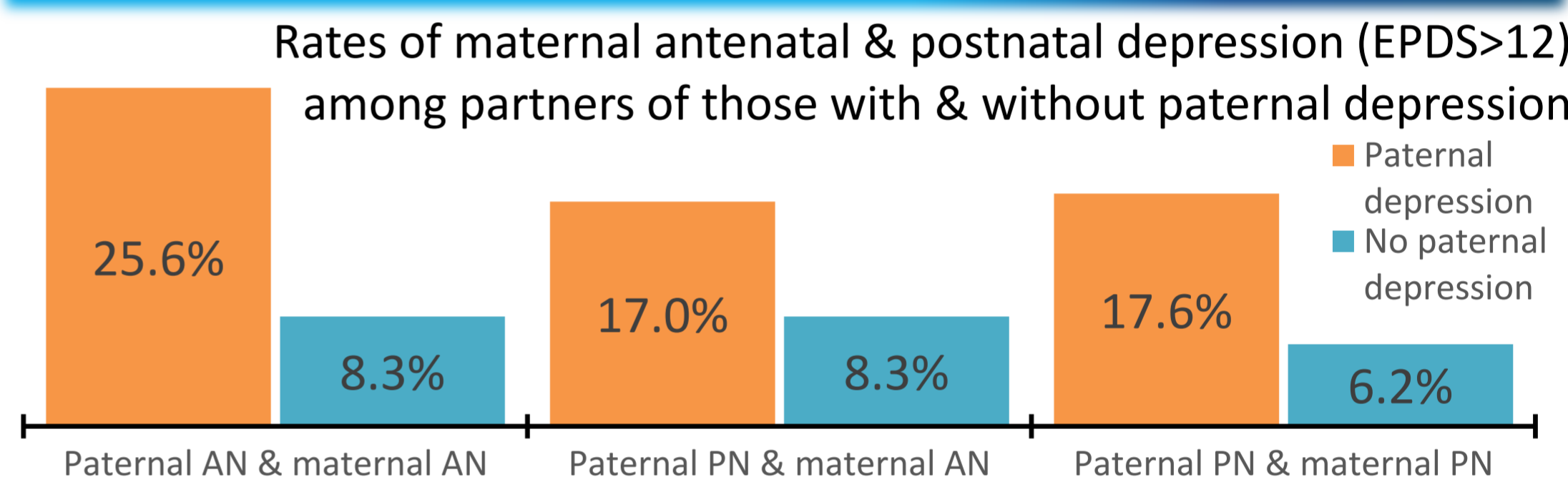
## Methods

- Participants: partners of women who are taking part in the longitudinal *Growing Up in New Zealand* birth cohort study
- Inclusion criteria: partners of pregnant women living in NZ who were due to give birth in April 2009-March 2010
- Face-to-face interviews at 2 time points: 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester of partner's pregnancy (AN) & 9 months after child's birth (PN)
- Measures: Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) & 9-item Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)
- Ethnically & socioeconomically diverse sample of 3523 men

## Sample characteristics & rates of depression



## Selected results



### Variables significantly associated with paternal depression symptoms in multivariate analyses

Antenatal paternal depression symptoms (EPDS>12)	OR (95% CI)
Paternal perceived stress during pregnancy	1.4 (1.3-1.5)
Paternal health during pregnancy	2 (1.1-3.5)
Postnatal paternal depression symptoms (PHQ-9>9)	OR (95% CI)
Paternal past history of depression	2.8 (1.7-4.7)
Paternal perceived stress in pregnancy	1.12 (1.1-1.2)
Paternal health at nine months	3.3 (2-5.1)
Relationship status at nine months after childbirth	5.6 (2-15.7)
Paternal employment status at nine months	1.8 (1.1-3.1)

## Conclusions & implications

- Over the perinatal period, 6.2% of men experienced elevated levels of either antenatal or postnatal depression
- Fathers who were stressed or in poor health had elevated depression symptoms during their partner's pregnancy & 9 months after the birth of their child
- Postnatal paternal depression symptoms were also associated with adverse social & relationship factors
- A past history of depression increased the risk of elevated postnatal paternal depression symptoms
- Maternal mental health was not associated with paternal depression symptoms in multivariate analyses

- Identifying who is most at-risk of paternal depression can help inform interventions to help men & their families

