**Sensory patterns, mental health and parenting outcomes in mothers with admitted to a mother-baby unit**

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*Background:* To support women with severe mental illnesses in a psychiatric mother-baby unit, a novel intervention derived from sensory modulation theory has been developed and trialled. The aim of this intervention is to improve maternal mental health and facilitate the mother-baby relationship. Sensory modulation involves adapting the sensory input received to support favourable self-regulation and maternal-infant attachment. The focus of this presentation is to examine the use of this sensory modulation approach in perinatal settings.

*Methodology*: Women in the Lavender Unit (N=120), completed a range of standardised assessments to assess maternal sensory patterns (Adolescent/Adult Sensory Profile), mental distress (Mental Health Inventory-38), and parenting outcomes (e.g., Maternal Postnatal Attachment Scale, Louis Macro Scale). A sensory modulation intervention has been trialed in a mother-baby unit with the occupational therapist, with cross-sectional, qualitative and quantitative evidence of outcomes.

*Results*: Sensory sensitivity, sensory avoidance, low registration, and psychological distress were positively associated with poorer parenting outcomes such as maternal-infant interaction, bonding, and parental confidence. The sensory modulation intervention in the mother-baby unit has shown positive qualitative and quantitative results.

*Conclusion*: Results of this study suggest that mothers with severe mental illnesses who have more atypical sensory patterns, this may be a possible risk factor for less optimal parenting outcomes. While further research is needed to clarify the nature of these findings, sensory approaches that support mothers’ emotional regulation may assist to improve maternal-infant interaction, bonding, and confidence.