DREXEL UNIVERSITY
Dornsife
School of Public Health

Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics

Doctoral Program in Epidemiology Thesis Defense

"Assisted Conception and Risk of Autism Spectrum Disorders in a Large Commercially Insured Population"

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PhD Candidate

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Date:
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Nesbitt Hall
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Philadelphia, PA 19104

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Abstract: Over the past 4 decades, the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) has increased from ~5 per 10,000 persons in the 1970s to current estimates of ~146 per 10,000 persons. Although much of this increase is likely due to changes in diagnostic criteria and ascertainment, it is unclear to what degree true temporal changes in ASD risk are also occurring. Nonetheless, because of their high prevalence and lifelong morbidity associated with the core features, ASDs are a major public health concern. Multiple lines of evidence suggest that peri-conceptional exposures, such as those related to assisted conception, may be of particular interest ASD etiology. This project has examined the potential association between AC, according to type of AC treatment, and risk of ASD through prospectively generated data available on a large commercially insured population. The identification of modifiable risk factors is vital to the development of strategies to reduce ASD risk.

Biography: Anna earned a Bachelor of Science in sociology and anthropology from the University of Utah in 2004 and a Master of Public Health in chronic disease epidemiology from Yale University in 2006. Ms. Wallace has more than ten years of experience working with large, complex administrative claims datasets and is currently a Director of Health Economics and Outcomes Research at HealthCore in Wilmington, DE.