



Use of the Public Health Nursing Service in the Infant Period

-A Secondary Analysis of the
Growing Up in Ireland Dataset-

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Use of the PHN Service in Infancy Legislative and Policy Context

- Notification of Births Act, 1907
- Health Act, 1970
- Child Care Act, 1991
- Best Health for Children, 2005
- Agenda for Children's Services, 2007
- Right from the Start, the Report of the Expert Advisory Group in the Early Years Strategy, 2013
- Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2014-2020



Use of the PHN Service in Infancy Benefits

A systematic review by Cowley et al (2013) concluded that a PHN Service can lead to:

- improvement in breastfeeding rates;
- reduction in accidents;
- prevention, identification and management of post-natal depression;
- increased immunisation rates;
- earlier disclosure of domestic violence;
- improvements in parenting;
- improvements in child behavioural problems; and
- improved cognitive development.



Use of the PHN Service in Infancy Objectives

This paper uses *Growing Up in Ireland* data to:

1. Explore the factors that are associated with use of the PHN Service in infancy.
2. Examine the extent to which the use of the PHN Service during this period is underpinned by the concept of (progressive) universalism (i.e. based on child and maternal needs rather than maternal and family socio-demographics and/or geographic location).



Use of the PHN Service in Infancy

Data and measures

Data:

Wave one of *Growing Up in Ireland* infant cohort data (at age 9 months)

Dependent measure:

- Average number of PHN contacts

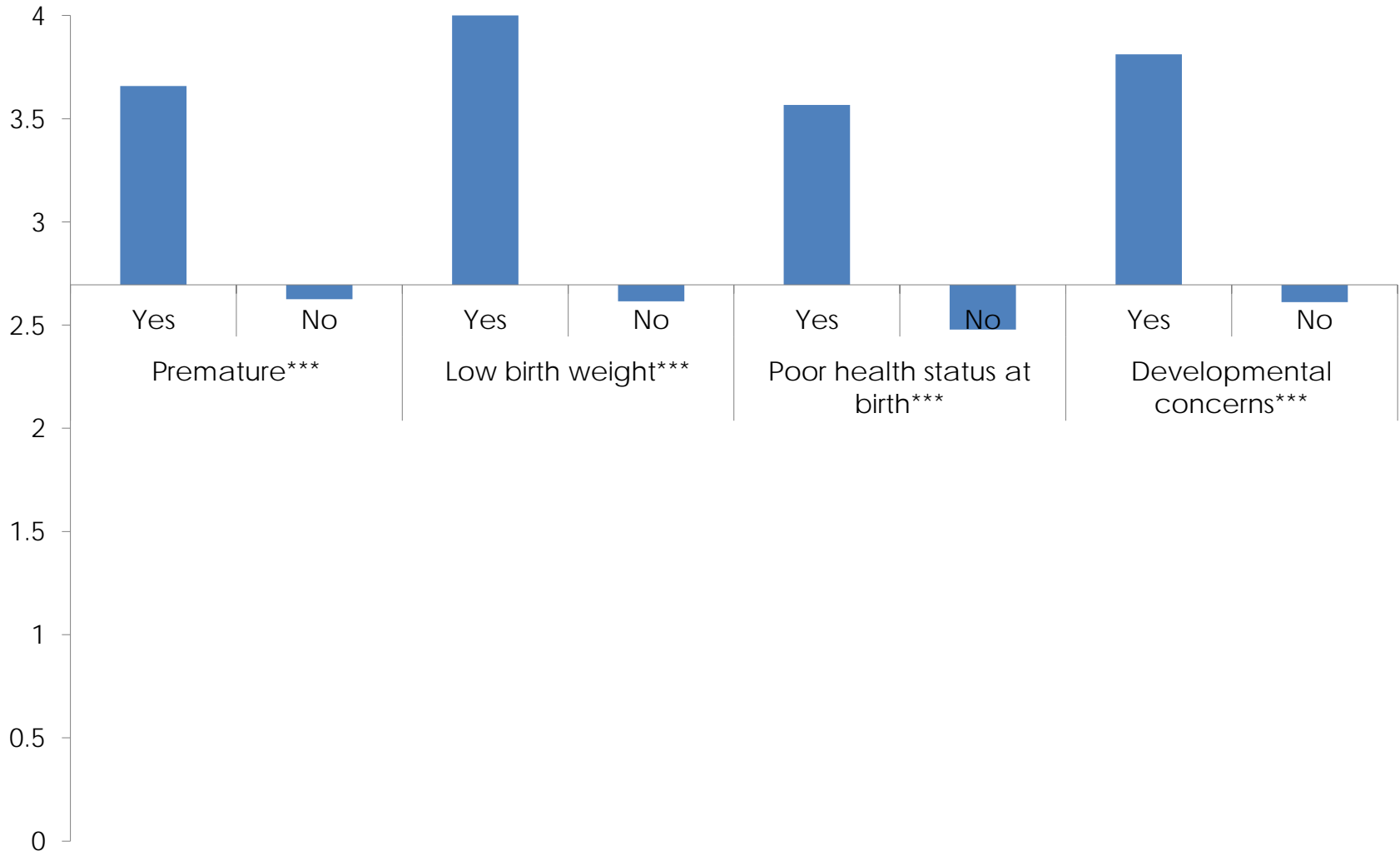
Independent measures:

- **Child need:** period of gestation, birthweight, health status at birth, developmental concerns
- **Maternal need:** mode of delivery, maternal depression, maternal-child attachment, breastfeeding status, birth order
- **Maternal and/or family socio-demographic characteristics:** Maternal (i.e. age, education and ethnic background) and family (i.e. structure and income) characteristics
- **Community characteristics:** area of residence, access to local health clinic



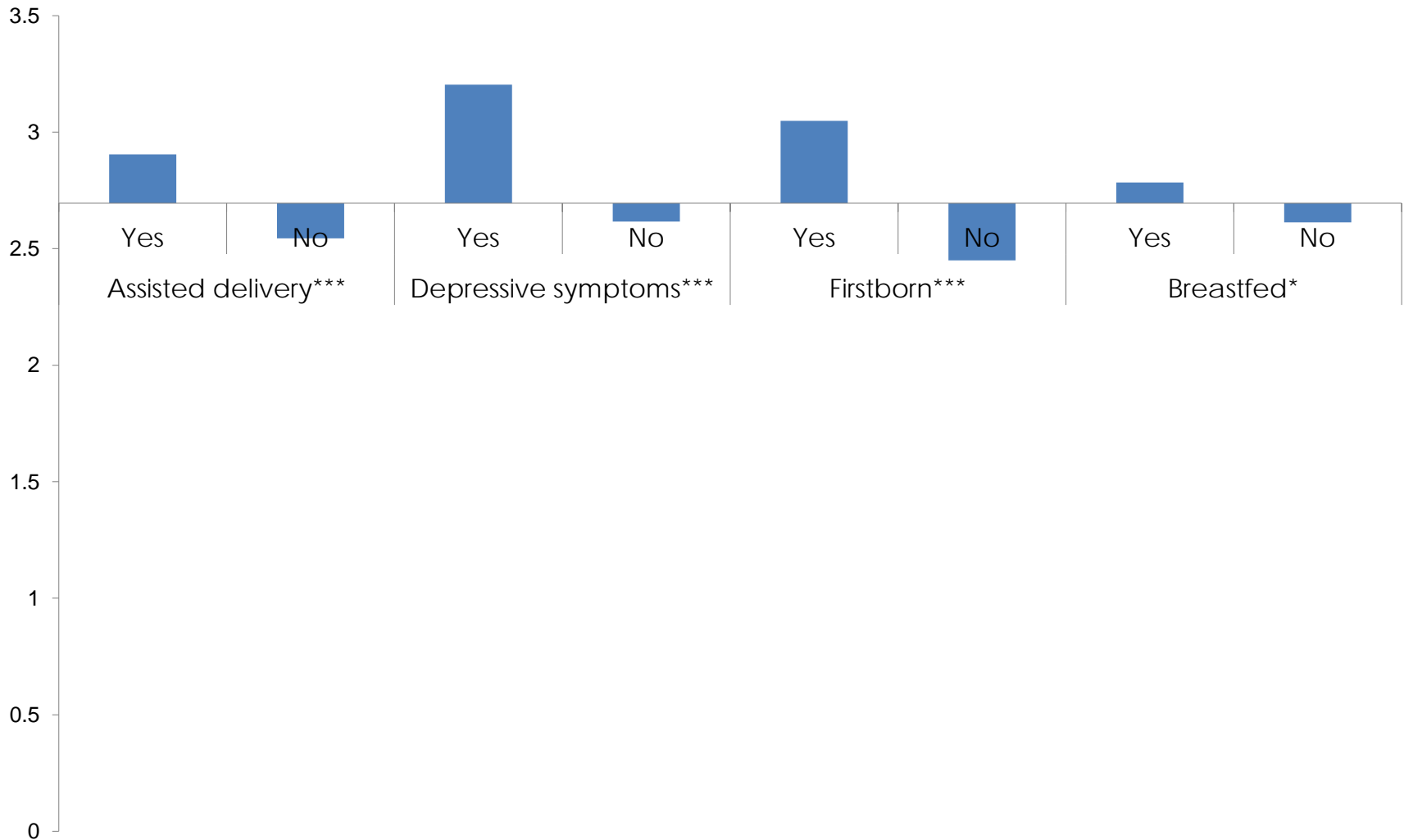
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Child need





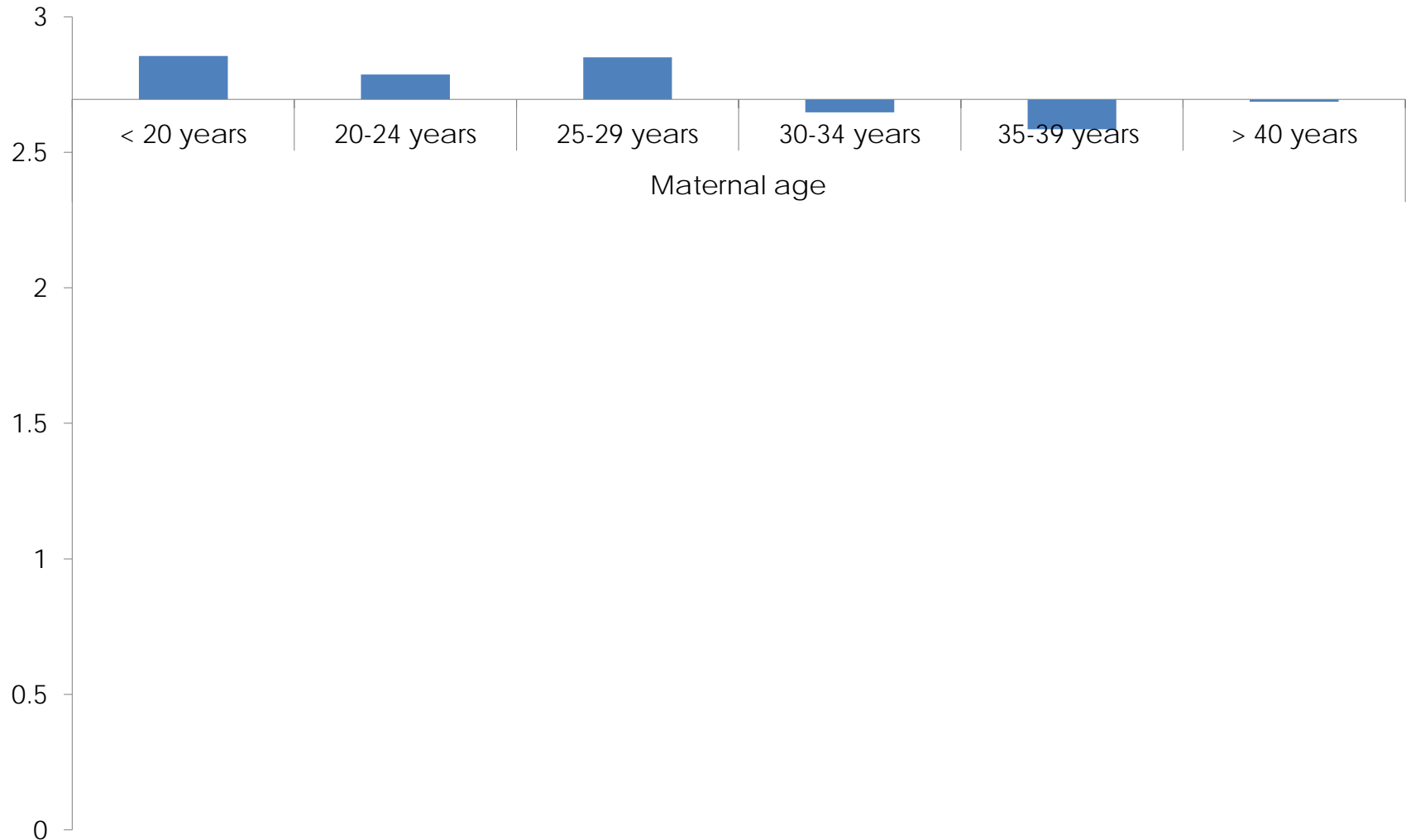
Use of the PHN Service in Infancy Maternal need





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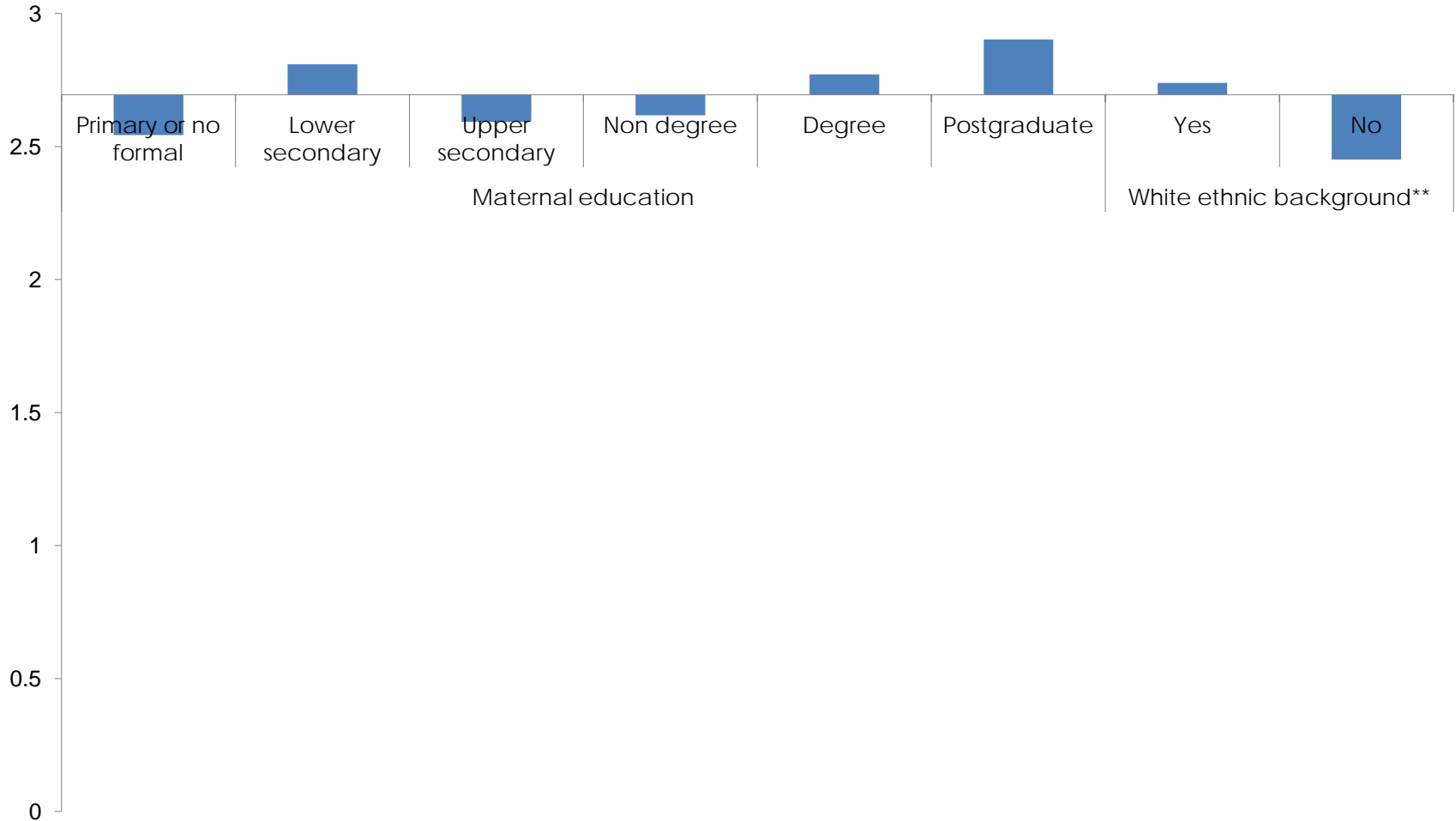
Maternal socio-demographic characteristics





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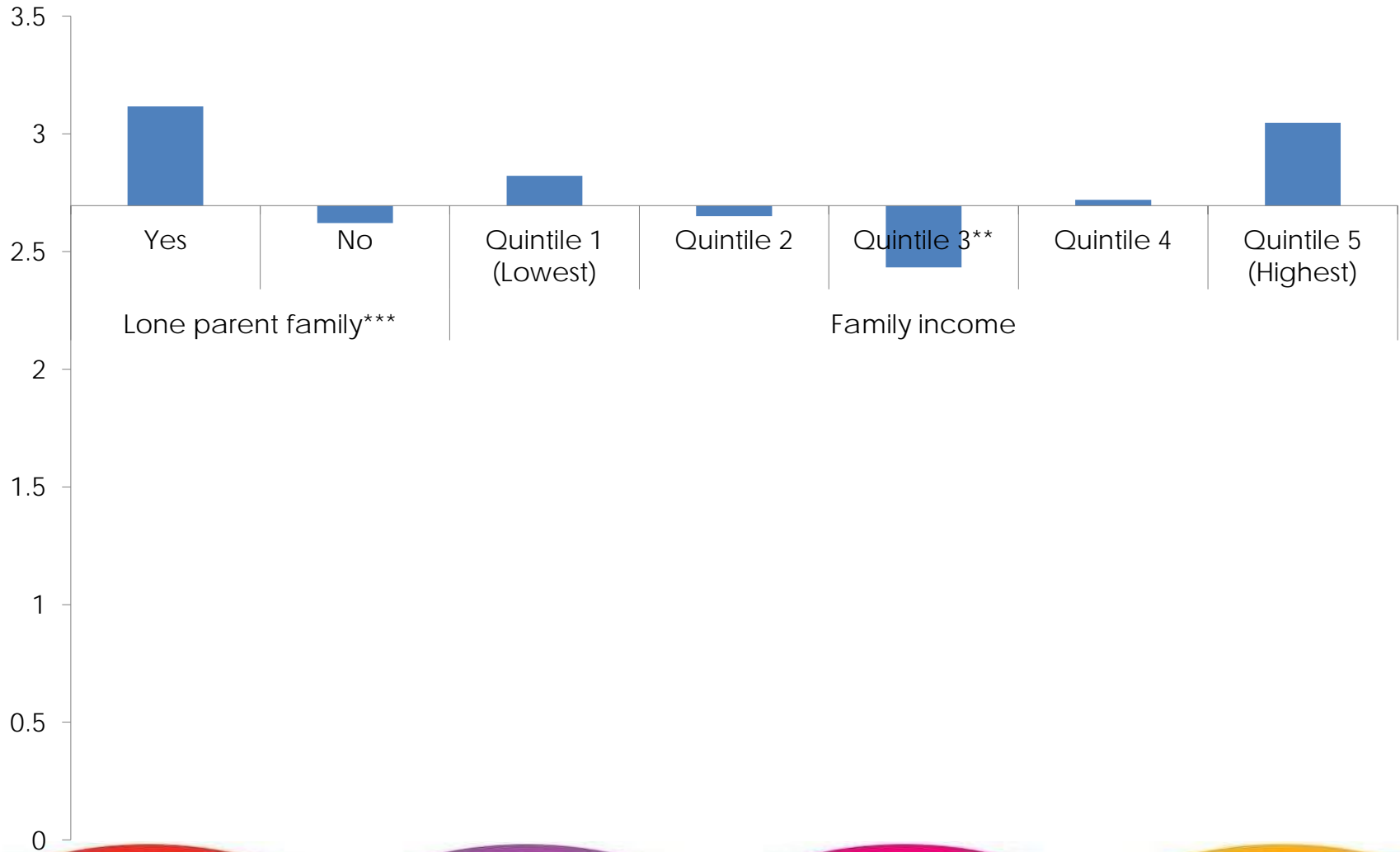
Maternal socio-demographic characteristics





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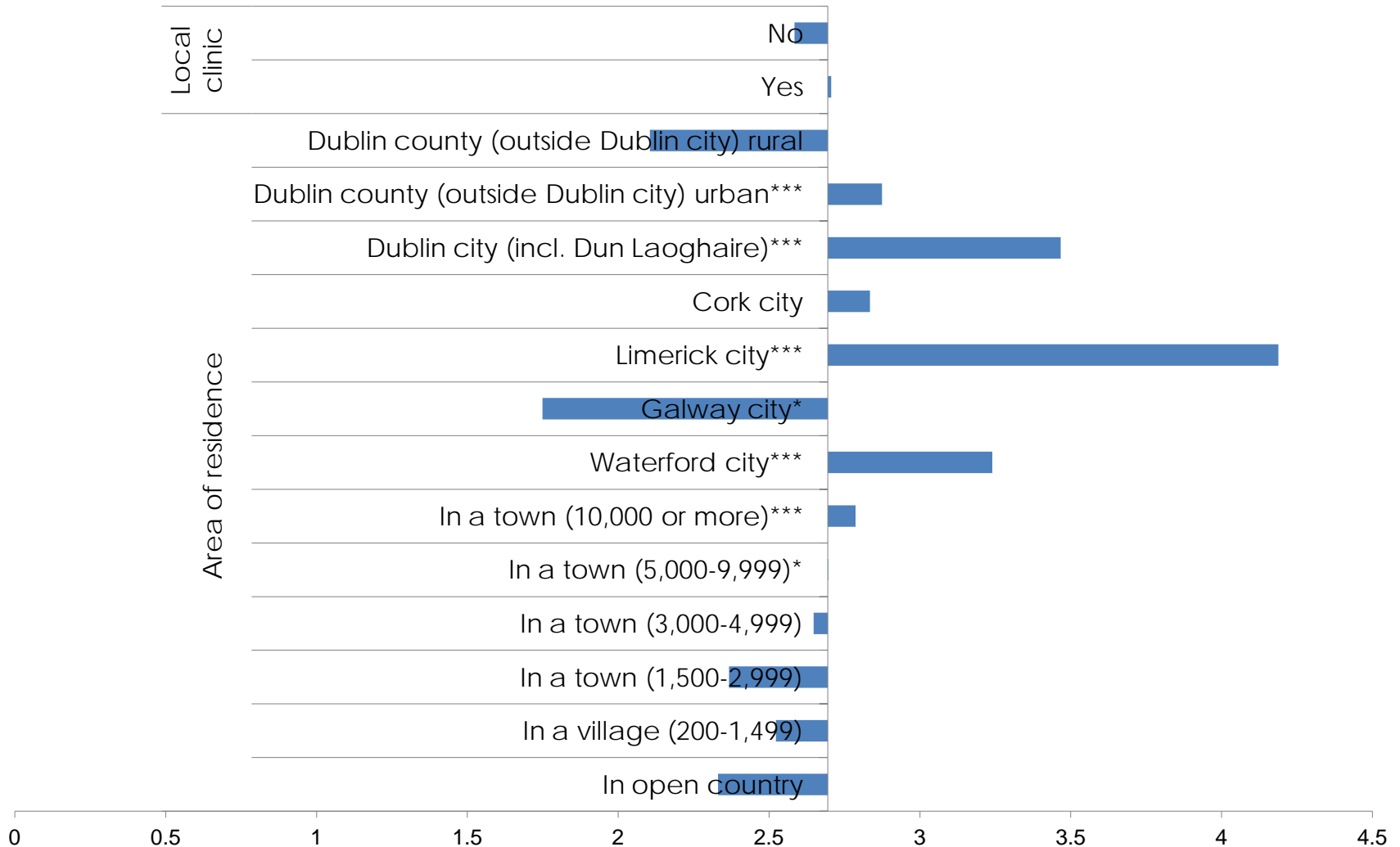
Family socio-demographic characteristics





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Community characteristics



		Coefficient	p value
Child need	Premature	0.319	0.170
	Low birth weight	0.814	0.006**
	Poor health status at birth	0.692	0.000***
	Developmental concerns	0.870	0.000***
Maternal need	Assisted delivery	0.150	0.068
	Depressive symptoms	0.452	0.001**
	Quality of attachment	-0.032	0.035*
	Breastfed at discharge from hospital	0.232	0.006**
	Firstborn	0.501	0.000***
Maternal socio-demographic characteristics	Maternal Age (Ref: Less than 20 years)		
	20-24 years	0.157	0.684
	25-29 years	0.437	0.272
	30-34 years	0.285	0.462
	35-39 years	0.202	0.610
	40 years or more	0.324	0.446
	Maternal Education (Ref: Primary or no formal)		
	Lower Secondary	0.131	0.661
	Upper Secondary	-0.091	0.739
	Non-Degree	-0.067	0.810
	Degree	-0.014	0.960
	Postgraduate	0.069	0.815
	White	0.491	0.000***
Family socio-demographics characteristics	One parent family	0.225	0.116
	Family Income (Ref Quintile 1 (Lowest))		
	Quintile 2	-0.152	0.231
	Quintile 3	-0.351	0.004**
	Quintile 4	-0.156	0.222
	Quintile 5 (Highest)	-0.031	0.831
Community characteristics	Area of residence (Ref: In open county)		
	In a village (200-1,499)	0.019	0.875
	In a town (1,500-2,999)	-0.098	0.564
	In a town (3,000-4,999)	0.231	0.238
	In a town (5,000-9,999)	0.274	0.089
	In a town (10,000 or more)	0.245	0.027*
	Waterford city	0.727	0.009**
	Galway city	-0.870	0.000***
	Limerick city	1.356	0.000***
	Cork city	0.432	0.320
	Dublin city (incl. Dun Laoghaire)	0.938	0.000***
	Dublin county (outside Dublin city) urban	0.446	0.001**
	Dublin county (outside Dublin city) rural	-0.213	0.638
	Local clinic	-0.061	0.585



Use of the PHN Service in Infancy Summary

- The use of the PHN Service is largely based on child and maternal need.
- Maternal and family socio-demographic factors are insignificant (with the exception of income quintile 3 and ethnicity) once child and maternal need is taken into account.
- Area of residence remains significant, which suggests there may be some inequities in the delivery of the PHN Service in Ireland, particularly in rural areas.