

Call for master's students: Research year in maternal health and intimate partner violence

Gynækologisk-Obstetrisk Forskningsenhed, SDU/OUH

The Gynaecology & Obstetrics Research Unit at the University of Southern Denmark and Odense University Hospital invites applications from highly motivated master's students with a strong interest in women's health and clinical research for a **research year project in 2026–2027**.

Violence against pregnant women: screening, risk factors, and data from an international EU project

Violence against pregnant women is a major public health concern with significant consequences for both maternal and infant health. Despite growing awareness, systematic identification of violence during pregnancy remains limited, particularly concerning psychosocial risk factors for using violence among partners to pregnant women, partners' mental health, and behavioural predictors of violence.

This research year project is embedded in an ongoing EU-funded international study, which investigates screening for violence among pregnant women and their partners in Denmark and Northern Italy. The Danish arm of the study collects digital survey data from partners to women giving birth at OUH Svendborg (OUH-SV), including health indicators, psychosocial stress, and risk behaviours relevant to potential violent behaviour.

The project offers the unique opportunity to analyse real-time prospective data, contribute to scientific publications, and work closely with both Danish and Italian collaborators.

Aim of the research year project

The student will work with one of the following possible research questions (to be finalised with the supervisor):

- Prevalence and patterns of risk factors for using violence among partners to pregnant women
- Associations between partner psychosocial stress, mental health indicators, and self-reported risk behaviours
- Cross-country comparison of partner characteristics between Denmark and Northern Italy
- Evaluation of the implementation of partner screening within maternal health pathways

The project may include quantitative analyses, survey methodology, or implementation research components.

Data foundation

The project is based on primary data collected through the EU project, including:

- Digital partner questionnaires (database established in REDCap – data monitoring through project period is required)
- Sociodemographic, behavioural, and mental health measures
- Internal EU project documentation
- Analyses will be conducted primarily in STATA.

Research environment

The research year will be conducted at the Gynaecology & Obstetrics Research Unit at Odense University Hospital, Odense. You will join a growing maternal health research group working with interdisciplinary and international collaborations.

You will:

- Work independently on your research year project under close supervision
- Take part in monthly online meetings with Italian project partners
- Contribute to internal EU reporting processes
- Participate in the broader research group environment at OUH/SDU

Hybrid work is possible. It is possible for two students to apply for a joint research year project where they collaborate about the data monitoring and data analysis.

Project period and funding

The project period is 12 months, starting 1 September 2026 (or by agreement). 1-2 student aid positions have been posted on top of this call, and ideally we hope to employ 1-2 students as students aids who will also do their research year on top of their research year. Students can apply for a research year scholarship while on leave from their master's programme (e.g. via SDU's research year scheme or external foundations). You will write and submit your master's thesis based on the project (spring 2027), and a senior member of the research group will act as main supervisor for the research.

Applicant requirements

Applicants must:

- Be enrolled in a relevant master's programme (e.g. medicine, public health, midwifery science, psychology, anthropology, or similar) at the University of Southern Denmark
- Have a strong interest in maternal health, gender-based violence, epidemiology, or clinical research
- Have good written English skills
- Experience with quantitative data analysis (preferably STATA) is an advantage, but not required

Application

Applications must include:

- A short motivation letter
- Curriculum vitae
- Transcript of records

Applications may be written in Danish or English and must be sent no later than 28 February 2026 to:
Associate Professor Ditte Søndergaard Linde (dsondergaard@health.sdu.dk) and Assistant Professor
Karen Andreasen (karen.andreasen2@rsyd.dk)

Further information

For questions about the research year, contact:

Ditte Søndergaard Linde – dsondergaard@health.sdu.dk

Karen Andreasen – karen.andreasen2@rsyd.dk