Reviewer’s report

Title: "No patient should die of PPH just for the lack of training!" Experiences from multi-professional simulation training on postpartum hemorrhage in northern Tanzania: a qualitative study

Version: 2 Date: 06 Dec 2016

Reviewer: Joanna Tai

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this work.

The topic of managing PPH is important, however I felt the background section focussed very much on the medical situation rather than the education principles and previous work, which is somewhat contained within the "summary of existing literature". I am also surprised that the literature review does not contain much in the way of specific literature on simulation in obstetrics - e.g. Multidisciplinary Team Training in a Simulation Setting for Acute Obstetric Emergencies: A Systematic Review, doi 10.1097/AOG.0b013e3181d9f4cd, also "Impact of simulation and team training on postpartum hemorrhage management in non-academic centers" http://dx.doi.org/10.3109/14767058.2014.923393. Nevertheless, this study is qualitative and appears to address a less studied area - perceptions of impact of PPH simulations on staff.

Page 6, line 49 it is unclear exactly what types of doctors were at the regional referral hospital - are medical officers & generalists the same group? if they are not, then the "or" should sit between them.

Page 7 - line 9 - the sentence ending "such as anaemia, with severe consequences regarding PPH" - does not quite make sense. Do the staff get anaemia? Can you rephrase?

Table 1 - average work experience is probably less useful than presenting the range of years worked - this may help readers to understand better if this type of intervention might work in their own setting.

Description of educational intervention - what does it mean in that the training "added up to EmONC and ALSO" training"?

Data analysis - (line 53, page 10) how was the coding checked for accuracy? by whom? Who did the additional checking? in terms of trustworthiness, you have said the key words but not demonstrated how the researchers were reflexive, including how their previous roles and experience as (presumably) medical practitioners and simulation trainers impacted on their interpretation of the data. Furthermore, I believe that qualitative content analysis does allow for themes outside those you might have originally expected to find - did everything coded fit nicely within the 2 research questions for the project? Was there anything different or surprising?
Results

The number of quotes per theme and subtheme is very uneven. I would recommend reconsidering the number of quotes required to illustrate each theme. Some quotes/themes also seem to say the same things that are said in other categories - e.g. quotes which could be considered to discuss reduced stress come under "shared understanding and responsibility", "the power of new knowledge", and also "reduction in stress level".

Page 16, line 16-18 - I'm not sure if this sentence says what you intend it to say - did the nurse midwives leave the doctors to attend to other duties?? This seems the opposite of the reported data.

Discussion

More links with the educational literature could be made to strengthen the argument that your simulation training for PPH adhered to educational principles, which seemed to aid in its success.

Limitations - I believe there are also some strengths to the study in opposition to the limitations cited - as mentioned earlier in the paper, splitting the team up for the research may have helped everyone to have a voice. On review of the focus group schedule it does not seem particularly biased towards getting participants to say positive things, so the balanced schedule might reduce concerns that participants didn't say anything particularly negative.

Conclusions - what does this study add? What should the follow-on research be? What questions about simulation PPH training remain? I also was surprised to see relatively "new" information about informants sharing many previous negative experiences with severe PPH prior to training - did this come up during the focus groups or was this known beforehand? It seems that things have turned around since the training and it would be good for you to discuss this positive contrast also as an outcome of the study.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes
Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review? If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

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