Reviewer's report

Title: Challenges in the Care for Consanguineous Couples: an Explorative Interview Study among General Practitioners and Midwives

Version: 1 Date: 25 July 2012

Reviewer: Alan Bittles

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A well-written and clearly presented account of a semi-formal qualitative study into attitudes towards consanguinity, conducted among a group of GPs and midwives in The Netherlands. As noted by the authors, the topic of consanguinity can be subject to social sensitivity, and with some persons may evoke a decidedly negative attitude. Given the large global numbers of couples in consanguineous marriages, and the high percentage of consanguineous unions in many immigrant communities in Western countries, the study is of significant contemporary relevance and interest.

Discretionary revisions
1. Title: ‘An exploratory interview study’ would be more appropriate than ‘an explorative interview study’.
2. It would be helpful if some comment was included in the Methods or in Table 1 regarding the birthplace and/or ethnicity of the study group.
3. p. 7, para 5 ‘..their clients refrain from taking further steps and thus the topic of consanguinity is set aside’.

This phrase is rather ambiguous and could benefit from further clarification. For example: i) Do the clients refrain from taking further steps because they expect that the midwife or GP will pursue the topic of prenatal diagnosis, or that they (the clients) would not wish to follow this line of discussion without first involving senior family members? ii) Why ‘set aside the topic of consanguinity’ because of a perceived lack of follow-up from the client with respect to prenatal diagnosis?

This stance suggests some sensitivity on the part of the study group with respect to consanguinity, and a reluctance to become too closely involved in discussions on the topic.

Minor essential revisions
1. p. 9, para 4 ‘..most participants admitted they believed consanguinity to be not done’. The current meaning of this phrase is unclear. Do you mean ‘they believed consanguinity to be undesirable’? or ‘they believed consanguinity should be avoided’?
2. References 6, 11 and 12 are incomplete.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.