Reviewer’s report

Title: Crying babies, tired mothers - dealing with the hurdles during the postnatal hospital stay: An interpretive phenomenological study

Version: 1 Date: 11 August 2009

Reviewer: Virginia Schmied

Reviewer’s report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
The research question is well defined. In the abstract would suggest that the aim is outlined as a separate point rather than as part of Background.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
The methodology and methods are appropriate to address the research aim. The study is informed by interpretive phenomenology and while the authors do give a brief mention of what interpretive phenomenology is, I would suggest that a little more detail about the methodology be given. What is currently provided ‘human beings are situated in a lifeworld, which sets the contours of possible thoughts and actions’.. except for the term ‘lifeworld’. This could in fact apply to a number of ‘constructivist’ approaches. A little more detail would be helpful to unfamiliar readers.

It would be helpful in the data collection section to provide some description of what type of events or interactions were observed and recorded in field notes as well as some indication of the interview prompts or questions used in relation to the care in hospital.

The data analysis approach is broad and could apply to any type of thematic analysis. As this study uses an interpretive phenomenological approach, could the authors provide more detail about how interpretive phenomenology informed data analysis.

3. Are the data sound?
The textual data presented are sound. That is they appear to be have been collected in a rigorous manner.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
Yes

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
The discussion section draws on a lot of research in the field to support the findings of the study. They are challenging findings as they offer an alternative perspective to what is promoted as ‘best practice’ in postnatal units.
The challenge to mother-infant relationships and the bonding thesis is well described in the discussion section. More could be said however, about the evidence base for 24 hour rooming in and the impact on breastfeeding initiation and duration. Some mention is made of the BFHI but it would be helpful in the context of these findings to provide more critique of the evidence base for continuous rooming-in.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
The limitations are stated

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
Related work is acknowledged

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
Yes title is appropriate

9. Is the writing acceptable?
This is a well written paper. However, because the work has been translated from German to English there are some expressions used that do not flow well. The paper will need a good edit before publication.