Reviewer's report

Title: Why don't some women attend antenatal and postnatal care services?: A qualitative study in Garut, Sukabumi and Ciamis districts of West Java province, Indonesia

Version: 1 Date: 19 May 2010

Reviewer: Pinar Ay

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This study aims to evaluate the barriers to antenatal and postnatal care services in selected provinces of Indonesia. It utilizes a qualitative method, which is a valuable tool for understanding and evaluating health seeking behavior. Besides, the study encompasses a wide range of participants (mothers and fathers of children, health care service providers, community health workers, traditional birth attendants etc.) which is an advantage for capturing perception and attitudes from different segments of the community. Yet the results section lacks a deep evaluation of health seeking behavior.

1. Major revisions:

A qualitative approach needs to address questions of why and how:

- How does the decision making process to seek care take place within the family? Do women have power in the decision making process? Do they have control in allocating money for health care services? Can women go out by themselves, can they travel alone? There is a need to evaluate these questions from a gender’s perspective.

- Why do some women know the actual function of Jamkesmas cards, while others do not? Why do some study participants know the benefit and type of immunization received by their infants, while others do not? What are the main differences between the women who are better informed from the others?

- There are quotations as “they say…” or “someone told me….” What are the sources of information? Are social networks important in getting information? How does information transfer between the professionals and community members take place?

- Are there variations in perceptions between different groups? How do younger mothers differ from the elder mothers, primipars from multipars, women from men, or different ethnic groups? This would be clearer if the authors could provide the basic socio demographic characteristics of the participants under the quotations.

- “Some people said traditional birth attendants are more patient and careful…” Do traditional birth attendants communicate better? Why are they evaluated as more “patient” and “careful”? How does the relationship of professional midwives with mothers differ from the relationship of traditional birth attendants with
mothers?
The findings and the discussion would provide a better understanding by addressing these questions.

2. Minor revisions
Also the discussion should be shaped on the findings. For instance the authors indicate in the discussion that “health education programs should not only target mothers but also other family members such as husbands who are usually the decision makers in the family”. But they do not provide a related finding in the results section.

**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.
Dr. Pinar Ay