Reviewer's report

Title: The role of hospital midwives in the Netherlands

Version: 1 Date: 23 September 2010

Reviewer: Caroline Homer

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for opportunity to review this interesting manuscript. Much of what has been previously written about The Netherlands relates to primary care and homebirth. As an international reader, it is therefore interesting to see a paper about hospital-based care and midwifery.

I enjoyed reading the paper. It is well written and clearly constructed. The Tables are complex but actually quite clear and well set out.

The aim is clear and the analysis is appropriate. The limitations are defined.

I recommend publication with one addition.

Minor Essential Revisions

I have a one main suggestion to improve the paper. These are predominately minor changes.

The paper needs to include a clearer description of the context in The Netherlands in relation to hospitals, health care in general and an explanation of the make up, training and distribution of the workforce in general. This needs to include the role of nurses in maternity care. This needs to be included in the Introduction.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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'