Reviewer’s report

Title: Hospitalisations for Interpersonal Violence and Adverse Maternal and Foetal Outcomes: A Whole Population Study

Version: 2 Date: 2 July 2011

Reviewer: Sixto Enrique Sanchez

Reviewer’s report:

MINOR: The title should be consistent with the objective of the study. The title: “Hospitalisations for Interpersonal Violence and Adverse Maternal and Foetal Outcomes: A Whole Population Study” is not consistent with the main objective what is: “to assess the difference between pregnant women admitted to hospital exposed to violence and pregnant women not exposed in terms of adverse maternal and foetal outcomes……”. The title should be followed by a subtitle identifying the place and years of the study. A better title could be: Maternal and fetal outcomes among pregnant women hospitalized due to interpersonal violence, a populations based study. Western Australia, 1970-200_. A better objective could be: To assess violence as a risk factor of maternal and fetal bad outcomes.

MINOR: In study Design: consider a retrospective cohort design population based

In the statistical part of the analysis, should say about statistical tests that has been used to obtain those p in table 1 and 2. The same should be specified under those tables. In the same part, they say that OR and CI95% of tables 3 and 4 are calculated using logistic regression. Is it true?. If they used it?, the authors should say which variables were adjusted for.

MINOR: The title of table 1 should be clearer and represent the content of the table. I suggest a better title: Demographic, reproductive, prenatal and smoking characteristics among cases exposed to violence and controls, Western Australia, 1970-200_. Multiparous (understood as 2 or more previous deliveries) represent 65.2%, not 81%. I think the assault type should be described just in the text, not in the table, it does not fit with the objective of the table. As described in the text, the relationship with perpetrators are not specified in the table. It should say: not shown in the table.

MINOR: A better title for table 2 could be: Maternal and fetal bad outcomes among women exposed to violence and controls. Western Australia, 1970-200_.

MINOR: A better title for table 3 could be: Adverse maternal bad outcomes among pregnant women hospitalized due to violence and controls and to other characteristics. Western Australia, 1970-200_. If the OR and CI95% are a result of a multivariate analysis using logistic regression, it should be specified in the title and in the button of the table (where should be stated the covariates
included in the logistic model). The same comments are for table 4.

MINOR: In table 4, the age reference group should be that of 26 or older. The age group of 25 or younger seems to be a risk factor according to table 1. It seems an error in table 4 about the reference group, it says # 27. Is it 20? (see table 1)

MINOR: In table 3, threaten of abortion is included in the bad outcomes, however in table 4, fetal distress is not included in the bad fetal outcomes, despite these two events were associated to violence, but in the opposite way (more frequent in the control group).

MINOR: I think the discussion part of the study is pretty well done. Here some critics and suggestions for this part:

How did they evaluate the presence or absence of gender violence in the comparison group?. It produce bias toward the null hypothesis if women in the control group were victims of violence. I think this should be described in limitations or weakness of the study.

Women in the case group are severe cases, since they were hospitalized due to interpersonal violence. This is well discussed in the discussion part. This could produce bias increasing the odds ratios of some bad outcome related to gender violence. Additionally, this study is just considering as cases those victims of acute violence, we do not know if they also had a status of chronic violence. So, we don’t know the degree in which bad outcomes are associated to acute or chronic violence.

DICRETIONARY: Some misspelling: words should be: Hospitalization, Utilized, Fetal

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests