Reviewer's report

Title: How good are we at implementing evidence to support the management of birth related perineal trauma? A UK wide survey of midwifery practice

Version: 2 Date: 5 April 2012

Reviewer: Angie Wilson

Reviewer's report:

An important survey of midwives' practises relating to the assessment and management of perineal trauma in England. Despite current guidelines for perineal management compliance is low. This raises the question as to whether there should be mandatory training for all midwives in perineal trauma management.

Minor essential revisions

1. Date and time scale/time frame of the survey in context of main PEARL study.
2. The date/of the results to inform PEARL study
3. What was the research question? Objectives stated.
4. This was a Semi-structured questionnaire
5. Spelling error p5 first para - staff expected to undertake - not undertaken
6. What were the models of maternity care - type of practice stated ie inner city or urban...is this a model?
7. Is there a difference between confidence and competence? Competence - the ability to do (incorporating knowledge, skills, attitudes and values).
   Confidence is dependent on the midwives' ability to do.
8. P14 2nd para- P?=? 0.001 - not sure if this is a typing error.

Discretionary revisions.


You raise the important issue of a standardised training package in perineal assessment and repair. Can we go further by saying that until we have standardised and mandatory competency assessed perineal repair programmes there will continue to be varying degrees of morbidity suffered by some women as a result of some poor/inappropriate midwifery practice...especially now that there is such a focus on genital tract sepsis (CMACE) and lack of postnatal perineal assessment. Midwives are not permitted to undertake venepuncture and
epidural top ups without mandatory training...why do we not have mandatory assessment of competency?


**Level of interest:** An article of outstanding merit and interest 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 I do not have any competing interests.