Reviewer’s report

Title: Surveillance during pregnancy: Methods and Response Rates from a hospital based pilot study of the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System in Ireland

Version: 1 Date: 27 July 2013

Reviewer: Reena Oza-Frank

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Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The authors need to include a more detailed explanation as to why they chose to sample only 124 women from the 9000 births at the hospital (in the methods section). This needs to be explained for 2 reasons: (1) to gain a better understanding of their methodology and (2) so other countries can duplicate their methods as desired.

2. Also in the methods, under PRAMS protocol and Study Materials, please explicitly state that PRAMS does NOT collect dietary data in any form, and why the authors chose to add this over other PRAMS questions.

3. Based on the data analysis description, I was expecting to see statistical tests comparing the 2 populations presented in Tables 1, 2, and 4. Please add statistical tests to strengthen your results and conclusions.

4. Please clarify how the comparative data from CUMH was obtained. Does the hospital have a mechanism through which to request such data? Is all the data available from an electronic medical record?

5. For those of us not familiar with the GUI study, it is important for the authors to provide more of a rationale as to why this was chosen as a comparison. Is it because the GUI study was meant to be nationally representative?

6. In table 3, antenatal care showed the lowest completion rate. Please include more of a discussion on why this is a limitation if your intent is to capture experiences before pregnancy.

7. Do the authors have data on costs to implement the survey? Such data would greatly enhance the manuscript, particularly for other countries considering such a study.

8. The discussion should include more information on why the sampling strategy used isn’t appropriate for nationwide surveillance. Is it because the hospitals throughout Ireland won’t be capable of providing the same types of data?

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Abstract - please add the word 'modified' to the first sentence of the methods
(“...test and evaluate a modified CDC PRAMS...”).

2. Abstract - it is not clear what the N=8,900 refers to in the methods. I'm assuming the number of annual births in the hospital? Please clarify.

3. Please switch the order of Tables 1 and 2. It makes more sense to compare the PRAMS sample to the hospital population BEFORE going into differences within the PRAMS sample.

4. Please present the results/tables in order in the text. As currently written, Table 4 results come before Table 3 results.

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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.