Reviewer's report

Title: Perspectives on weight gain and lifestyle practices during pregnancy among women with a history of macrosomia: a qualitative study

Version: 1 Date: 16 July 2013

Reviewer: A Rannard

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Major Compulsory Revisions -
1. More detail needed on purposive sampling methods. In the Methods section on p5, the authors state that purposive sampling was used to recruit mothers who’s BMI varied in the first trimester of their second pregnancy. Was this the only purposive aspect of sampling? I wasn’t clear on whether or not purposive sampling was also used for other areas of demography, although there is some reference to occupation and education level in the results section on p8. I think it would be useful to know how ‘typical’ participants were of the population under study by using a broader range of sampling matrix elements, rather than just concentrating on BMI alone.

2. Methodology is unclear in terms of the type of qualitative approach taken. The absence of a pre-defined sample size suggests a grounded theory approach, as does the influence of data saturation on recruitment.

3. The authors don’t explain why body language description was written up in field notes.

Minor Essential Revisions -

1. Choice of words on p5 2nd para - not sure ‘indepthly’ is an actual word. Would something like this be better...'that enables researchers to examine phenomena in-depth....?'

Discretionary Revisions

1. This is an interesting paper, clearly set out and easy to read.

2. The authors are focussed on the need to develop a weight management intervention for women of child-bearing years in order to ‘prevent’ macrosomia. They explored the views of women with a history of previously macrosomic infants in order to establish their views of weight gain, eating patterns and activity levels during second pregnancies. I couldn't help feeling as I was reading the paper that a weight management intervention would be something else for women to worry about both before and during pregnancy. In fact, there were mixed responses to suggestions of weight gain guidelines from participants. Yet there is clearly a need to reduce the incidence of macrosomia while at the same time not overmedicalising the issue or adding to women's stress during pregnancy. This paper provides insight into the ways women approach food
intake, exercise etc before, during and after pregnancy, which has not been explored in detail up to this point. Instead of adopting the clinical approach of telling women how and what to eat, when to exercise and how to live, I think the paper would benefit from a more participatory sense of working in partnership with real women to develop acceptable and more usable solutions to the problem of macrosomia. This would mean a change to the Conclusions 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'