Reviewer's report

Title: Obstetric outcomes for nulliparous women who received routine individualized treatment for severe fear of childbirth - a retrospective case control study.

Version: 1 Date: 12 October 2013

Reviewer: Wendy Hall

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to read this manuscript. It is important to offer interventions to women with fear of childbirth (FOC). Your manuscript suggests that women with FOC have the potential to deliver vaginally when offered such interventions.

Major compulsory revisions:

You have not clearly acknowledged previous published work in your manuscript. Incorporate adequate referencing in the background and discussion sections. Many statements are made with no substantiation from the literature. You need to define your research questions. Your aim is not clearly stated with no incorporation of the reference group. Conduct a more sophisticated statistical analysis that controls for differences in outcomes related to nature of care provider, obesity, and obstetrical complications requiring in-patient stays. Compare your index group with your reference group on characteristics when delivered by elective c-section. Create a binary on treatment session frequency that is mutually exclusive, 1-4 and 5 and above. If you do not undertake the statistical comparisons I have requested, include your lack of attention to those in the limitations section. Incorporate some non-European samples in your references. Your abstract needs to better incorporate the reference group.

Minor Essential Revisions:

Request an editor examine your paper to correct the grammatical problems. Clarify early in the paper who made the diagnosis of childbirth fear. How does that diagnosis compare with scores on the WDEQ? It would strengthen your manuscript to present the background data to support no differences in groups between the two hospitals. Refer to the significant difference in age between your index and reference group. Indicate whether there were any significant differences in sessions by care provider. What proportion of the sessions were with the psychotherapist and the physician? You need to clarify on p. 7 that the women with FOC gave birth more frequently via elective c-section. Take the reference out of your concluding section. Clarify the sentence where you cite references 4 and 5 on p. 7. To better balance your discussion, you need to make a stronger statement that the reason women with FOC who had more in-patient care had an elective c-section was the result of antenatal obstetrical complications. More clarification needs to be provided about the comments about midwives' and obstetricians' approaches to caring for women and
recommendations for type of delivery.

Discretionary revisions:
Avoid statements like is not supported by the facts. Findings are not factual truths.

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare I have no competing interests.