Reviewer’s report

Title: Transfers to hospital in planned home births - a systematic review

Version: 1 Date: 17 January 2014

Reviewer: Valerie Smith

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting systematic review bringing together data on the topic of transfer to hospital in planned home birth. This will certainly present a useful source of information for those with a specific interest in the topic.

The review question is well defined and the methods are appropriate and clearly described. The data is presented in a clear and reader friendly manner with tables used to enhance textual commentary. Limitations to this review are provided and the conclusions made are sound and link clearly to the findings of the review.

I have some minor revisions that the authors might consider:

• Page 5, Line 6; is the figure 16,848 correct? In line 4 you have 168,618 as a figure for one study, but the 16,848 suggests another figure of this magnitude for another study which does not add up with what you say in Line 4.

• Page 5, Line 20; you state that one of the studies was assessed to be of good quality, yet you indicate 2 references, 1 and 19; which one is the correct one?

• Page 7, Line 22; this sentence is posed as a question which does not read so well. Perhaps you might consider rephrasing to read; ‘this poses the question as to whether independent midwives are more willing to accept such women, or whether the women themselves are exerting pressure on midwives to accept them for home birth’

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

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 have no competing interests