Reviewer's report

Title: Mothers’ experience of their contact with their stillborn infant: An interpretative phenomenological analysis.

Version: 3 Date: 21 May 2014

Reviewer: Helen Bedford

Reviewer's report:

Reviewers report
Helen Bedford 21.5.14

Please number your comments and divide them into

Thank you for the opportunity of reviewing this manuscript again – the changes in response to all reviewers’ comments (including my own) are positive.

• Major Compulsory Revisions

The author must respond to these before a decision on publication can be reached. For example, additional necessary experiments or controls, statistical mistakes, errors in interpretation.

• Minor Essential Revisions

The author can be trusted to make these. For example, missing labels on figures, the wrong use of a term, spelling mistakes.

• Discretionary Revisions

These are recommendations for improvement which the author can choose to ignore. For example clarifications, data that would be useful but not essential.

• 1 The inserted paragraph with an indication of the location this study within the wider longitudinal study is welcomed, however it would be beneficial to indicate when this part of the study/these interviews took place with respect to the other parts of the study (e.g. structured clinical interview).

• 2 The revised text in the method section is welcomed. Re the end of the 2nd sentence – do you mean other methodologies rather than ‘by the researcher’? Re the sentence commencing ‘Within this dynamic process’ isn’t it the case that the researcher can play an active role by holding an insider’s perspective – but a researcher may be an outsider to the phenomena? In the sentence which follows re the researcher’s ‘conceptions’ needs to be clearer.

• 3 Re the inserted text in the ‘Study design and participants’ section – para commencing ‘Once a consent form’ and sentence commencing ‘This meant that they could’ – isn’t it the case that such choices of location intend/aim to promote relaxation, safety, openness etc? Minor point - Last sentence of this paragraph commencing ‘This included information’ could read more clearly.
• 4 Re Data collection and analysis section – para 2. Need to be clear if all/some (which) of the researchers repeatedly read the transcripts and listened to the interviews. It is clearly indicated in the Authors’ contributions section that all researchers/authors were involved in data analysis (and also noted in the section just before the Conclusions) – but only partial detail indicated in this section (e.g. credibility checks indicated at end of this section). NB It would also be helpful to indicate clarity around master themes and superordinate themes for readers.

• 5 The last sentence of the section headed ‘Superordinate theme 2 Physicality’ – this is very unclear to me as a reader.

Please note that both the comments entered here and answers to the questions below constitute the report, bearing your name that will be forwarded to the authors and published on the site if the article is accepted.

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'