Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Why do women present late for antenatal care? A qualitative interview study

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 28 February 2014

**Reviewer:** Katrien Beeckman

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Why do women present late for antenatal care? A qualitative interview study

The authors wrote an interesting paper that reads very well.

There are some major compulsory revisions

While a lot is already written on determinants of late initiation of care, the authors found that their results differ from others as the social-cultural stereotyping was not found. I think this definition or concept is not made clear enough in the paper, and therefore it is difficult to understand the difference between these current and previous findings. eg. in Downe et al (that presents a review of qualitative studies) aspects of ‘not knowing’, avoidance and relation with professionals also seemed to be important elements in weighing up and balancing out the choice to attend antenatal care, and as such the difference between the findings in this paper could be made more explicit. What is meant by this web of decisions bound up with preventative factors? And how could this be taken up prior to an antenatal appointment?

In Europe it is generally accepted that care should start in the first trimester, EU-Peristat defined this period before 12 completed weeks of gestation, the NICE guidelines (are also mentioned in the paper) confirm this optimal timing of onset. In this paper however 19 weeks were chosen as inclusion criterion. This means that other elements influencing attendance could be different in those subgroups and therefore potentially not made explicit.

The link with including reproductive education in community settings is very accurate, also internationally. How could this be organized, do the authors have suggestions? I would like some more information about the concept of the ‘joined up’ approach.

**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 that I have no competing interests