Reviewer's report

Title: A qualitative descriptive study of the group prenatal care experience: perceptions of women with low-risk pregnancies and their midwives

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Reviewer: Deborah Turnbull

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Major Compulsory

This is an important report that helps to put into context, an emerging approach to antenatal care. It should prove useful to maternity care providers from a range of settings. The rationale for the work is couched in terms of examining facilitators and barriers to group based prenatal care but in reality the presentation of results exceeds this fairly narrow scoping and I would encourage the authors to re-phrase their purpose more in line with the results as they are presented. On this point, I really did struggle with the originality of this paper. From the research referenced in the paper, it is evident that there are existing qualitative studies examining the issue and these have also taken place in Canada. I didn’t find the explanation about what sets this paper apart, very compelling. That’s not to say that the study is not important but the reason for doing another study needs to be crisper. The sampling frame requires greater attention; just how robust an approach was used? Was a theoretical sampling frame used for both groups or was it convenience based? What are the characteristics of the women and midwives? Did the researchers really achieve theoretical saturation? Existing research would suggest that this is unlikely with such a sample. The comment is also made about the clinical risk profile of the women included in the study. This could do with some explanation. I also wondered about the methods that were put in place in order to ensure quality such as the use of an audit trail. I think that the paper can be reduced somewhat and also that the discussion could be made less descriptive and repetitive, with a greater emphasis placed on the implications of the results. The presentation of the results in the abstract is somewhat weak and does not really capture the actual findings.

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:
nil