Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 27 June 2014

Reviewer: Denise Lawler

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Minor Essential Revisions

This is a well constructed paper with a clear focus and structure. It details how the qualitative descriptive study was conducted in an ethical sound manner. The results are interesting and once published, the paper will contribute to the extant literature regarding GPC. The study is methodological and ethically sound and the actions taken to ensure rigour were clearly articulated. The purpose of the study is clearly stated. Data was presented succinctly under eight categories and a number of subcategories, using participant exemplars to validate inclusion in a specific category and subcategory. The discussion and conclusion sections are appropriate and recommendations for future research and practice are made. The table presented is very helpful.

In summary, a well constructed paper that when published will contribute to the literature regarding the subject matter. I recommend that if minor essential revisions regarding methodology, formatting and grammar were addressed (see below) this paper be published.

Methodology

1. Sampling is not discussed, although implicit it is not discussed explicitly, I think this should be addressed.

2. A profile of the participants is not presented; this would be very helpful if presented at the beginning of the results section. A brief description would be sufficient if supplemented with a table providing details such as age, marital status, gestation, parity etc.

3. Although ethical principles of informed consent and confidentiality were addressed other principles e.g. protection from harm, right to withdraw from the study were not addressed. I think reference must be made to the other ethical principles that guided and informed the conduct of research.

4. A semi-structured interview guide was used during data collection but how this guide was developed or populated was not discussed. A brief discussion on its development is needed.

5. The paper describes how participants recorded their own BPs (line 112); I suggest that clarity be provided on whether the apparatus used was an automated or manual machine. If manual, although the participants were
described as very low risk, a brief discussion on the accuracy of such practice warrants some discussion. Specifically if the BP reading obtained by the woman was confirmed as accurate by the midwife. Likewise I suggest a similar discussion on the practice of urinalysis. Additionally a definition of very low risk would be useful.

Formatting and grammar – this needs attention

1. There are a number of extra spaces throughout the paper (see lines 150, 21-. 336, 487, 492, 506, and 700).
2. If the woman/midwife cannot be identified I suggest you do not use the quote but with such a small sample number are the participant’s not identifiable? (see lines 404, 510, 511, 665).
3. Although the categories and subcategories are labeled it might be useful to number and possibly bold the categories (1-8) and then italic the subcategories. Additionally the name of the said category is different in the body of the paper and table 1, which detail the categories and subcategories. The 'learning from others’ subcategory (category 1) is not labeled in the body of the paper.
4. There are some grammatical errors (see lines 167 (Sandelowski), 304, 722 (also)).
5. The major formatting issue is the inconsistent presentation of participant quotes, some are indented, some are not, some have quotation marks, some do not, this inconsistency is throughout the paper.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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