Reviewer's report

Title: The early postnatal period: exploring women's views, expectations and experiences of care using focus groups in Victoria, Australia

Version: 2 Date: 25 February 2008

Reviewer: Marie Berg

Reviewer's report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
Not enough clear as it is part of a larger project. Needs to be more distinct elated exactly to the aim of this sub-study. Abstract and aim as explained at the end of background should be congruent.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
The method is appropriate, however the description of the method is not enough clear. I need a better definition of what is a basic theme, an organized theme, a and a global theme according to the methodology used. (reference 18). The authors also use the concept â##categoryâ##, how does this relate to themes?
A table is needed giving an example of the analytic process from text/meaning units to basic theme to organized theme, to global theme, including the categories.

3. Are the data sound? Yes, however the there is an in congruence in that two fathers were included as participants but the way of describing and discussing the results does not include the fathers, usually the word â##womenâ## is used. This should be clarified, or perhaps the best is to just delete the two fathers in this study.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data disposition?
The authors use a footnote and I do not know if this is in accordance with the principal of the journal.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
Yes, however some information in discussion should be mentioned in the method, see paragraph 8 in discussion, about recruitment.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? Yes.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished? Yes
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
The title: yes, The abstract: Not enough clear, see 9.

9. Is the writing acceptable?
The language is somewhere not enough clear: Two examples

1. Abstract/description of the participants: Could be more distinct ex for example describe the time after post partum by describing that the xx participants were interviewed xx-12 months after childbirth with a mean of xxxxx. This should also be clarified under method/or beginning of results.

2. Abstract, â##groups were audio-tapedâ#|,â## The word group douse not fit, should be interviews or discussions.

10. I do not find any question about results but here is my comment for this:
In congruence with the unclear description of what is the different levels of themes, and which are these, the results are unclear described. There are several reasons for this conclusion. For example, the global themes are mentioned in different ways in text and in title; in text as anxiety/fear, and as title â## womenâ##s anxiety and fear around caring for a new babyâ##. I prefer the last one, notice here that the men are not included, see point 3 above.

It is not clear what is a organized theme, what is a basic theme. I want a Table in results giving an overview of themes on different levels.

The titles â##First time mothers compared with those who had experienceâ##: What is this? It has the same title level as the global themes however it is not mentioned as a global theme.

Conclusion:
It is an important paper about a very important problem in maternity health care of international interest. I am positive to publication however major compulsory revisions are needed which the author must respond to before a decision on publication.