Reviewer's report

Title: Parents' beliefs about appropriate infant size, growth and feeding behaviour: implications for the prevention of childhood obesity

Version: 5 Date: 29 October 2010

Reviewer: Kristen Hurley

Reviewer's report:

The article “Parents’ beliefs about appropriate infant size, growth and feeding behavior: implications for the prevention of childhood obesity” is a qualitative study used to explore UK parents’ beliefs concerning their infant’s size, growth, feeding behaviors and parental receptiveness to early intervention. The manuscript continues to be improved since first submission.

See remaining comments below:

Major Compulsory Revision:

Abstract:

Background: Consider removing words “modifiable” and “not modifiable factor” throughout document. I think that most of the factors mentioned in the paper are modifiable to some extent; and that removing the term might increase clarity and prevent reader confusion.

Conclusion: Consider removing word “health” in last sentence of conclusion.

Page 4; Background section; lines 6-8: Consider removing sentence about primary non modifiable risk factor; does not seem necessary and I would argue that some of the factors are modifiable (e.g. birth weight)

Page 4; 2nd paragraph. Consider moving first 2 sentences in 2nd paragraph (An infant’s weight,....) up to end of 1st paragraph. Consider starting 2nd paragraph with “The relationship between...” and adding a header of Infant Feeding Practices before 2nd paragraph. Later headers in the Background would include “Parental Response to Infant Temperament” and “Parental Control over Food Intake”

Also, Parental control over food intake is discussed in background but not really addressed in results or discussion. May consider switching focus from parental control to “perception of infant growth and appetite”.

Page 5; top paragraph; lines 3-4: I would argue that a “cautious interpretation”is required because mother’s who decide to breastfeed may be inherently different than mothers who formula feed (e.g. more health conscience, more responsive, higher SES) and not just that the sample was exclusively white, etc.

Page 5, 2nd paragraph. Consider adding header as suggested above
Page 5, 2nd paragraph, line 7. Consider changing “parents of frustrated infants” to parents who perceive their infants to be fussy or frustrated. We don’t know how fussy the infant’s really are. Interview is based on parental perception. Throughout paper, sometimes authors use term “parental” sometime “material”, consider choosing one term and use it throughout (for consistency).

Page 5, paragraph 3. Consider adding header as suggested above (e.g. parental control of food OR parental perceptions of infant size and growth-as suggested above). Consider removing topic of feeding control as suggested above.

Discretionary Revisions

Page 7, Line 3: Whose weight and height are author’s referring to here (mothers or children?)

Page 8, line 2. Consider saying parents rather than participants here. May help to clarify follow subsequent results (e.g. weight data) are about parent not infant.

Page 12, line 2-3. Consider removing work non-modifiable here (things can be done prenatally to prevent LBW) and they should be in order to prevent rapid weight gain trajectories early in life.

Page 20, strength and limitations of study, line 5. Consider word “true” with “typical”

Page 20, line 7-8: Consider clarifying what you mean by theoretically and empirically generalisable.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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