Author's response to reviews

Title: Please understand when I cry out in pain: women's accounts of maternity services during labour and delivery in Ghana

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Author's response to reviews: see over
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BMC Public Health,  
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Middlesex House,  
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Dear Editor,

Re: Please understand when I cry out in pain: women’s accounts of maternity services during labour and delivery in Ghana

I am pleased to re-submit the manuscript entitled "Please understand when I cry out in pain: women's accounts of maternity services during labour and delivery in Ghana" for consideration in BMC Public Health. The manuscript has been revised in response to a final reviewer’s comments. Please see details of the reviewer’s comment with our response and an indication of how and where the point has been addressed in the manuscript, overleaf.

We have checked the manuscript is prepared in the format required of your journal and submitted using your web-based system. No conflict of interest is anticipated by any of the authors. Sources of funding for the work are acknowledged in the manuscript. The article has not already been published and is not being considered for publication elsewhere.

I have sent the article to you in Word format. I hope you will find the article suitable for consideration.

Yours sincerely

Lucia D’Ambruoso

Attached: Response to Reviewer’s Report
Response to Reviewer's Report
Reviewer: Christine McCourt
Date: 30 October 2005

Discretionary Revisions

The author has responded to other reviewers' points about the time gap between birth and interview. There are a number of studies which do, in fact, suggest that women's recall of birth events, including emotional and interactional issues, are very accurate over very long periods of time (including 5 years plus). One study (Waldenstrom - in Birth) has also suggested that while being accurate, women's level of criticism may increase over time. This is also useful, because it suggests a reasonable time interval can help to counter the 'courtesy' effect, or simply being grateful for safe delivery. While caution regarding results is always wise, I would recommend that the authors refer to some of this literature, since it supports the validity of the work.

* Several studies that demonstrate the accuracy of long-term recall of women's obstetric events are now referred to in the methods (page 6, paragraph 1) and discussion (page 14, paragraph 3) sections. The Waldenstrom Birth study is referred to in the discussion (page 14, paragraph 3) to support the accuracy of women's accounts of delivery care up to 5 years post partum and in terms of the potential of the recall period to reduce courtesy bias.