Reviewer's report

Title: Barriers among Danish women and general practitioners to raising the issue of intimate partner violence in general practice: a qualitative study

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Reviewer: Bosiljka Djikanovic

Reviewer's report:

First of all, my compliments to authors who succeeded to build considerable knowledge over such a sensitive issue, but based on the modest number of individual and groups interviews. As they said, by now this topic was under-investigated in their country, and it was not known what are the attitudes and believes of both healthcare professionals and women related to communication over intimate partner violence in healthcare settings. The content itself is fine but it should be restructured, and I have several concerns that should be extensively addressed throughout the manuscript, in order to improve credibility of qualitative findings and reporting in academic formats in peer-reviewed journals.

Major Compulsory Revisions
- In general, the manuscript in its current form is over-lengthy and it structure resembles theses rather than academic article. It has to be shortened for one fourth, at least.
- Please be more focused in the Introduction and end it with explicit research questions. The use of term “refuge” needs short clarification. Is it a shelter for women?
- In the Method, Study, design, second sentence needs to be expanded, it is unclear now. It is insufficient to say “Elements from grounded theory (…) was used as an interpretative analytic tool”.
- Throughout the Method, there is no reference related to conducting focus groups, such as Krueger & Casey (2000), for example, and there was no observer during the focus group, so I am concerned whether this form of qualitative research might be called "focus group interview", as it was not held according to the well established standards. Author might consider calling it “group interview” rather than focus groups interview, since participants’ replying to each other is also not presented here. In addition, I found it insufficient to present “sample of questions” that were asked (Table 2), as a frame, but rather a few questions should be presented. Please make sure that the principles of rigor of qualitative research applies here.
- Summary of characteristics of the research participants (Table 1) belong to the Results section, not Method, as well as results of coding, under the subheading Coding and analysis.
- Inclusion criteria should be explicitly stated, under the “Description of recruitment of interviewees” subheading

- Results section currently misses the structure, and it does not follow the order presented in the Method, which makes it difficult to follow (GP, abused women, non-abused women).

- Please correct the beginning of the Results section, and avoid elements of discussion in the Results section, that are extensively presented now.

- Results section, pg. 26, authors mentioned Revised Conflict Tactics Scale as a frequently used screening tool. I can not agree with this statement; there are many other instruments that are being used. Please have a look at Rabin et al (2009), on screening instruments, published in Am J Prev Med, and correct appropriately.

- In Discussion, and in manuscript as a whole, it is unclear what is the context of “private practice” (pg. 34) and its specificities. Also, the next paragraph needs more elaboration, especially the statement “apparently paradoxical choices of the victims” (pg. 34), and reference related to the police perspective is needed here as well. Last paragraph (pg. 36) is unclear, what is meant by external implications, normalization process, and gendered pre-understanding.

- Study limitations, the last paragraph (pg. 37), the first sentence (“Finally discussing severity of the IPV problem (...)” is not relevant to the content which was investigated here, so the whole paragraph needs to be rewritten.

- Conclusions are unacceptably long.

**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