Reviewer's report

Title: Mothers’ Experiences in the Nurse-Family Partnership Program: A Qualitative Case Study

Version: 1 Date: 22 March 2012

Reviewer: Lynn Kemp

Reviewer's report:

Overall this paper provides a good description of mothers’ experiences of the nurse family partnership program. In the context of this being represented as a component of a feasibility study, greater reflection on whether what mothers were perceiving is consistent with the training and intention of the program would facilitate a more critical review of the program from the mothers perspective.

Major Compulsory Revisions

The number of mothers who dropped out of the program and were not able to be followed up in the study is a major limitation. The authors state (page 5) that this analysis "will provide insights into what women like and value about the program and factors that influence their participation in the program". The presented information can partly achieve the former aim, however, the latter aim cannot be met as the authors are unable to present information on those who did and did not participate.

Much of the literature presented in the background is quite old. The authors should source more recent literature regarding both intervention programs and also the extensive literature about the ways of effectively working with new mothers including other models such as Family Partnership Model. In the absence of such literature and consideration of the findings in light of the same, the article will be of limited interest to readers other than those engaged in the NFP program.

The method of recruitment is unclear. On page 7 the authors report that "The women were recruited through prenatal referrals" but later state that "new mothers are assessed during the postpartum period". How were the mothers to participate in NFP identified and how and on what basis were they chosen to receive NFP rather than HBHC program for at-risk mothers?

Although this is a qualitative descriptive study, the authors should consider the issues of attribution of the mothers perceptions to the program. In particular, the attribution of positive experiences of pregnancy and early parenting to NFP needs to be considered carefully as these first-time parents will have had no frame of comparison.

Care should be taken in drawing conclusions from the presented data. Specifically, the conclusion on page 23 that the social support given by the NFP nurses enables mothers to engage in activities to employ healthy parenting and self development is not supported by the presented data.
A more considered and reflective presentation of the limitations of the study, including those issues discussed above is needed in the section on limitations and strengths.

Minor Essential Revisions

Discretionary Revisions
There are a number of formatting errors throughout the document and there are a number of repeated references. The authors should correct these if required by the editors.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**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.