Reviewer's report

Title: Barriers and facilitators of health promotion and obesity prevention at child health centers

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Reviewer: Min Hae Park

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This is a nicely presented paper that will be of interest to those working in childhood obesity prevention in the Swedish context. The study objectives are clearly defined, and the methods used appear to be appropriate. However, some clarifications in the methods, reporting of the results and discussion are required. Some minor revisions to language are also recommended.

- Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Background – in addition to describing the global context, some information about the extent of the childhood obesity problem in Sweden and the prevalence of overweight among children at CHCs would be helpful

2. Methods – it is stated that CHCs covered diverse geographic/demographic groups, but more information is required on how they were selected. What were criteria for inclusion in this study? Also list inclusion criteria and justification for selection of nurses – how many nurses per CHC; why were nurses who worked at two separate CHCs excluded? The approach to sampling should be described, e.g. whether the aim was to achieve saturation or maximum variation in the sample etc. A brief description of nurses that were invited but chose not to participate would also be of interest.

3. Results – some description of how the themes applied to different types of nurses would be interesting. For example, were there any notable differences in perceived barriers or experiences of nurses in private versus public facilities? Or by level of experience or patient population?

4. Discussion

Paragraph 1 – ‘... the CHCs in this study did not seem to follow recommendations fully, possibly due to a lack of managerial support at CHCs’ – if nurses reported a lack of managerial support this could be an important barrier to health promotion, which should be reported in the results section, and implications for health services should be discussed more fully.

Paragraph 2 – ‘Preschool is the ideal age for prevention activities...’ It would be interesting if authors could expand on this point and make recommendations for prevention activities in the CHC setting. Some discussion of how effective the CHC nurse and referral system is would be of interest – what happens to children that enter this care pathway?

Paragraph 7 – Reference 33 ‘...dietary habits, physical activity, and screen time
exposures were ranked fourth, fourteenth, and twenty-first, respectively.' Ranked in what? This sentence seems incomplete.

Paragraph 7 – Parent groups are not mentioned in the results yet they are discussed here.

Paragraph 8 – ‘... our results showed that obesity prevention requires societal effort.’ These results aren’t described previously; authors should avoid introducing new results in the discussion.

Strengths and limitations – ‘Authentic citations ensured trustworthiness.’ This sentence does not make sense, please clarify.

In general, discussion of the implications of the study could be expanded, with some consideration of which are the most important barriers to address at CHCs.

- Minor Essential Revisions

5. Background, 1st paragraph – remove ‘of’ in: ‘...40 million children younger than five years...’

6. Background, 3rd paragraph – ‘(i) scrutinize how nurses determine or identify...’ I would suggest that ‘scrutinize’ is replaced with ‘describe’ or a similar verb, as scrutinize suggests a more critical analysis than was carried out.

7. Participant selection and data collection, 1st paragraph – explain what ‘child health developers’ are.

8. It was unclear whether the interviews were conducted in Swedish or English – any methods of translation should be described.

9. Results: concerned parents take the initiative – ‘Sometimes parents had a premonition that their child...’ I think premonition is the wrong choice of word, and would suggest ‘...perceived that their child...’ or ‘...were concerned that their child...’

10. Results: Avoidance or delayed information – ‘Another strategy involved initiating dialogue but not leaning to heavily...’ ‘to’ should be ‘too’.

11. Results: Unhealthy diet habits – ‘...gruel easily resulted in an overload of energy when given inaccurately.’ ‘Inaccurately’ is the wrong choice of word – do authors mean without monitoring?

12. Authors repeatedly use the term ‘chubby,’ which is too colloquial for a scientific paper. Unless in the context of a direct quotation, the term ‘overweight’ would be more appropriate.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests.

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