Reviewer's report

Title: Including elements of content and timing of care in the assessment of antenatal care trajectories, the conceptualisation of a new tool.

Version: 3 Date: 29 January 2011

Reviewer: Jennifer Fenwick

Reviewer's report:

For Authors

I enjoyed reading your paper. The topic is an important one and your work will add to the existing literature. I have however made a number of recommendations. They are made in the spirit of assisting your strengthen your work. I hope you find them useful as you work towards publication.

Please note that in giving my feedback I have used the word 'you' – this refers to the team.

Discretionary Revisions

Abstract: you have stated that the CTP comprises four categories and reflects care that is needed in 'every' pregnancy (my emphasis). I guess I'm asking you to consider your language here and in the rest of the paper – for example does every woman 'need' an ultrasound? There would be many healthy pregnant women who would not consider an ultrasound particularly necessary or needed! Certainly having nearly 6 U/S in a healthy pregnancy is a terrible waste of resources and not evidenced based practice. This issue if also worthy of some debate perhaps in your discussion.

Minor Essential Revisions

The paper needs some closer attention to grammar and syntax.

Referencing inconsistency also need attention.

Please consider defining / or clarifying the phrase 'follow-up pregnancy' or perhaps whether this term is most suitable. I'm presuming you mean 'ongoing antenatal care'.

Introduction: 3rd paragraph, 3rd sentence... replace 'will' with 'are likely to..' 

Selection of indicators – 1st paragraph – last sentence – replace the 1st 'better' with 'superior' and the second with 'carefully monitoring blood pressure improves the diagnosis and successful treatment of preeclampsia.

Selection of indicators – 4th paragraph – try 'In addition to accounting for....' Rtehr than 'besides taking into account...'
Selection of indicators – 5th paragraph – 1st sentence too long.. Full stop after ‘US screening. Then ‘This was based on…’

Selection of indicators – 5th paragraph – 2nd last sentence - clarify phrase ‘ the tool in the study was.. ‘ what study?

Be mindful of your language – for example 3rd paragraph under the conceptualisation heading (page 8) – please consider using ‘Women are classified to the ‘appropriate category’ where they have received ...

Page 12 – ‘Women assigned to the APNCU categories of....’

Conclusion – 1st sentence – replace ‘obviously' with ‘appears to have..”

Wording - Make a different to the health and wellbeing of childbearing women and their offspring

Major Compulsory Revisions

Overall comment:
In general I found the paper a little confusing. I think it would help if you more clearly articulated which part of your program of work this particular paper addresses.

For example in the abstract the following statement could be used – second sentence; This study builds on previous work by further refining a tool that considers both the content and timing of antenatal care.

This issue also leads onto a query I have about how you have used the word ‘conceptualisation’. Using it as you have, for example in the title, suggests that the study is perhaps a literature review that has, as an end point, a recommended design for a new tool. However you have gone much further than this – this paper is refining an already developed tool that has undergone some initial testing. Or is this incorrect?

The heading Methods on page 5 should be removed. This section should be incorporated into your introduction

Selection of indicators – 4th paragraph – the phrase ‘between countries’ needs clarification – which countries?

Clearly write aim of the study outlined in this paper. There is confusion with what this study is doing as opposed to the earlier pilot work - referenced to 46

Heading - Conceptualisation of content and timing of care pregnancy tool (CPT)

As stated this section does not really make sense to me.

You seem to be saying that the CTP was designed in another study? Or do you mean that the tool was conceptualised as a result of this first study into care received during pregnancy?
Where you have made reference to the first study then stated (method see data collection) – this should actually be referenced to your first publication - reference 46.

The phrase ‘the procedure of conceptualisation of the CTP tool included 3 dimensions..’ does not make sense and is not linked to the above paragraph? Should it be something like...

The next step was to detail the classification system. Based on ???... Three categories were chosen, inadequate, intermediate and sufficient.... you then need to define these much more clearly for the reader. This is really important given the results are all about these classifications.

3rd paragraph under this heading (page 8) the sentence commence ‘A woman is followed sufficiently.... doesn’t make sense.

Heading Data Collection page 8 - The heading ‘Methods’ should precede this
Then you need the sentence.. ‘We conducted a prospective observational study...’

This needs to be followed by text under the following headings
Setting
Participants
Recruitment procedure
Data collection
Data analysis
Ethical considerations

The statement ‘data were analysed with SPSS 17.0’ is not sufficient. You need to detail your analysis of the data. For example Chi analysis etc.

RESULTS – Comparison (page 10)
APNCU categories need defining earlier in the paper. Then here you can talk about the differences
Consider the use of tables to present some of the results

DISCUSSION
From my reading of the paper it appears that this work is about ‘refining’ / testing?? a tool that attempts to account for content and timing of care rather than visits alone? Does this by comparing the new tool to the APNCU index????

Re over consumption of care – yes refining necessary but perhaps also need to make comment about the high number of US as an example? Do you think tools of this nature might actually perpetuate over use of technologies that should only be used after assessment of the woman’ s individual situation needs?
Best wishes with this and future work

**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'