Reviewer’s report

Title: Assessment of the uptake of neonatal and young infant referrals by community health workers to public health facilities in an urban informal settlement, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Version: 1 Date: 27 November 2012

Reviewer: Jolly Nankunda

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for offering me the opportunity to review this interesting manuscript.

- Minor Essential Revisions

Abstract
1. The abstract is clearly written and gives a summary of what to expect in the manuscript.

Background
2. A bit long but clearly describes the background to the study. The information given in the background section is relevant. The study objectives are clearly spelt out.

Methods
Data management and analysis
3. The description of how the data collected by the open ended questions was managed to reach the conclusions is not clearly described. Was it the open ended questions that were grouped into themes as portrayed in the manuscript? What was done with this information after entering it into Excel?

Results
Referral completion
4. In the first part of this paragraph, the denominator used for referral completion is 110 but in the later part of the same paragraph, the denominator is changed to 108. It is not clear how this comes about and nothing is said about it.

Table 1: Characteristics of the mothers
5. The numbers given for the various characteristics of the mothers do not add up to the figure given at the top row of the table ie 104. Instead they add up to 97, this needs clarification.

6. What do the numbers in brackets refer to?

Table 2: Characteristics of infants
7. The numbers given for the infant characteristic of breastfed in the 24 hours
before the interview, do not add up to the total number given in the topmost row and it is not clear what happened to the missing ones.

Discussion
8. The findings are discussed well and the limitations of the study are also discussed.

Conclusions
9. These are well articulated and they relate to the objectives of the study.

- Discretionary Revisions

Table 3: Delay in completing referral
10. A total of 78 reasons for delay in completing referral is given in table 3. Did any of the mothers give more than one reason for their delay? Were those that delayed in completing referral only 78?

Figure 1 : Age of infant at last referral
11. The information presented in Figure 1 can be stated in a sentence so the figure can be left out without losing much information.

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

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'