Reviewer's report

Title: Office-based screening for domestic violence: use of a child safety questionnaire.

Version: 2 Date: 3 December 2003

Reviewer: gregory parkinson

Reviewer's report:

General
To my knowledge, this is the first (and commendably large) attempt to demonstrate that screening at pediatric visits increases the rate of identification of maternal abuse. This would be an important step. Key to this is the accuracy of the rate of identification data. More information with respect to 'passive screening' is required to assess the quality of this data.
If the data is accurate, then it is very good work.
I do feel that the discussion is too lengthy and strays away from what is relevant to this paper.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. RE:'Passive Screening'
a. How was data collected for this time period?
b. What was the denominator ie how many children/families were seen?
c. When compared to the active screening group, were the statistics based on a passive rate of 5 out of the total for 3 months, or the theoretical 20 out of an extrapolated total?
2. RE: Violence during pregnancy
The questionnaire asks about this but the results are not reported; they should be, or the discussion re: pregnancy should be deleted.
3. RE: Discussion The first 10 paragraphs (7 not including the pregnancy information) are all background; ie there is no mention of the current study. 2 should be more than enough.

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes

Declaration of competing interests: None