Reviewer’s report

Title: Management of pregnant and postnatal women with pre-existing diabetes or cardiac disease using multi-disciplinary team models of care: a systematic review

Version: 2

Date: 7 October 2014

Reviewer: Luca Ronfani

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

Methods section:
The criteria for inclusion/exclusion of the studies in the review should be stated more clearly. In particular, the criterion for the exclusion of studies due to methodological quality is not defined in the Methods section. This is relevant since 16 papers were excluded after review of methodology (rows 250-251 and Figure 1).

Again, with respect to the evaluation of the methodological validity of the primary studies, authors stated (rows 250 and rows 232-233) that they used appraisal checklists developed by JBI appropriate to the study methods. It would be useful that authors report these checklists as Additional materials, to better understand what quality items have been evaluated. Furthermore, authors stated (rows 256-257): “Table 1 presents findings on the quality of included studies as assessed by JBI criteria”. JBI criteria (and consequently Table 1) describe only the level of evidence and this is quite different from the evaluation of the methodological quality of a primary study. In Table 1, besides the level of evidence, authors should report the methodological quality of the included studies, scored on the basis of the above mentioned checklists.

Row 227-230: reading these rows it is not clear whether the initial assessment for relevance by titles and abstracts was carried out by two independent reviewers. Only in the results section it is clearly stated that "The abstracts of these papers were independently assessed by SB and CT". But, again, it is not clear if the initial evaluation of titles was done independently by the two reviewers. As the review had three stages of searching (identification, screening, eligibility) and four levels of exclusion (after initial evaluation of titles, after evaluation of abstracts, after review applying inclusion / exclusion criteria, after review of methodology quality) the authors should state in the Methods section if all these stages were carried out independently by two reviewers. Furthermore, authors should clearly state in the Methods section the inclusion/exclusion criteria adopted.

Minor Essential Revisions

Methods section:
Row 164-165: In the sentence "...whose strength is in facilitating systematic reviews of research that use other approaches", it is not clear what other approaches the authors refer to.

Rows 195-199: was the choice to identify quantitative and qualitative evidence defined "a priori" (before the conduct of the review)? More generally, the authors should state if the research questions and inclusion criteria were established before conducting the review (i.e. if they were published in a protocol or approved by an Ethic Committee).

Row 224: Substitute "Appendix 1" with "Appendix 2" (Appendix 1 details JBI Levels of Evidence and is properly quoted after the Box 1)

Rows 222-223: the main sources of policy and grey literature searched should be stated

Results

Rows 254-256: Author should consider to move this sentence at the end of the Methods in a "Data synthesis" section. Furthermore, reading the text it seems that it is possible to conduct a metaanalysis only of RCT and this is not correct. I think it would be better to rephrase the sentence.

Row 264: the semicolon after "UK" should be deleted and the sentence "one study......cardiac disease [26]" placed in brackets

Row 280: the semicolon after "work" should be replaced by the colon

Row 467: put the square brackets before 31

Discretionary Revisions

Rows 267-269 "Given the.... ..... were included.": the concept expressed in this sentence has been already extensively stated in the Methods section. I think this sentence should be deleted.

Row 357: should be deleted

Row 478: to better clarify the sentence, I would specify "...women with cardiac disease who were..."

Row 666: "base" could be deleted

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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