Reviewer's report

Title: Development and initial testing of a Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) information website for multi-ethnic and low socio-economic women

Version: 3  Date: 5 December 2014

Reviewer: Catriona Jones

Reviewer's report:

A topic that will be of interest to readers with discretionary revisions (see below)

The question or in this case the aim (developing and testing an intervention to improve knowledge and self-management of GDM) of the project is well defined and important. It is timely and relevant to the current problem of GDM, as this is one of the greatest health challenges of the 21st century, and rates have increased considerably in the past 20 years. When inadequately managed, GDM results in a 2–3 times higher morbidity rate for women and infants and therefore the need for new and effective interventions to improve knowledge and self-management are crucial, these facts are fully presented and defined in the introduction and background sections.

Appropriate controls appear to have been used.

The data has been appropriately interpreted, and the results appear to be balanced and are supported by the data. The discussion is adequate in length, succinct and focused. The discussion and conclusion of the manuscript reflects that a proportion of relevant literature has been used to contextualise the results. Tables have been used to summarize the data and identify important comparisons. The number of tables is appropriate.

Methods are appropriate, and the details provided in the manuscript are sufficient to allow others to replication.

The strengths are that the study is well designed and the methodology appropriate. The authors have identified weaknesses such as small sample size.

The manuscript is well written, logical and easy to comprehend, the tables adequately summarize the data, and make it more understandable, the number of tables is appropriate.

Revisions: just explain a little about how the authors intend to explore and address (line 343) the issue of food values reflecting entrenched cultural beliefs.

Additional notes:
This manuscript describing the development and initial testing of a Gestational Diabetes Mellitus information website for multi ethnic and low socio-economic women, merits publication. The manuscript is considered timely and relevant to a
current problem; it is well written, logical, and easy to comprehend, the study was well designed and has appropriate methodology. There is appropriate interpretation of the results, sufficiently described means of measuring data; a sample population that is unbiased. The abstract adequately represents the manuscript, and the text is easy to follow. Whilst the findings with respect to improvements of knowledge and management of GDM are ‘less than expected’ and the finding of improvement being seen among women with lower rather higher educational levels is not yet fully understood, the authors have acknowledged this, and are aware of the potential contributory issues around possible ambiguity and misinterpretation of questions and other factors. The study itself provides some important pointers for consideration in the design of future web based interventions. The authors appropriately noted some of the limitations of the study design and the intervention. The study design as outlined in the Methods section is sufficient in detail regarding how participants were chosen to test the first version of the web based intervention. The Results section is appropriate, and relatively clear. In the Discussion, there is adequate acknowledgement of aspects of the project itself that require further exploration and development and this appears to have been the overall purpose of the ‘pilot’ type study.

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'