Reviewer’s report

Title: The impact of a Referral Card-Based Intervention on Intimate Partner Violence, Psychosocial Health, Help-Seeking and Safety Behaviour during Pregnancy and Postpartum: A Randomized Controlled Trial

Version: 0 Date: 16 Oct 2016

Reviewer: Cari Clark

Reviewer's report:

Overall, an important question and well conducted trial. Authors should be commended for publishing null results as they are an important contribution to the knowledge base, even if some years after the trial was complete. Suggested revisions/clarifications are listed below that in this reviewer's opinion would strengthen the manuscript.

Major:

While a number of interesting scenarios were reviewed for why IPV went down in both groups and the card was not effective relative to the control. At the time the trial was started the evidence may have been less clear, but it is considerably clearer now that just giving a referral card is not likely to have a large and lasting impact on women's experience of IPV. The major review on this topic should be recognized and it would be helpful to have more emphasis on findings of studies with equally low intensive interventions and less emphasis on findings from more intensive / multidimensional interventions.

- O'Doherty et al. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2015 Jul 22;(7)

There seems to be little justification for why the primary outcome from both follow up time points is not be reported in the same manuscript, especially since the trial finished several years ago. If there is a limitation put on the range of data provided, it would be more useful to limit the secondary outcomes reported to save space for the primary outcome, as the text clearly indicates that there is not clear consensus on the exact time period within which change might be detected.

Minor:

Modern missing data techniques would strengthen the analysis strategy and save space (less need for missing data sensitive analyses) for primary analytic concerns and would retain precious data given the modest sample size.
It is unclear from the consort diagram why a person would be lost to follow up for language reasons as this should have been detected initially.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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