Reviewer's report

Title: Emotional and cognitive experiences during the time of diagnosis and decision-making following a prenatal diagnosis: A qualitative study of males presented with congenital heart defect in the fetus carried by their pregnant partner

Version: 0 Date: 09 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Ana Fonseca

Reviewer's report:

Review

Thank you for the opportunity to review the paper entitled "Emotional reactions of males presented with congenital heart defect in the fetus carried by their pregnant partner: A qualitative interview study". The paper is clearly organized and well-written. Moreover, it addresses an important topic with relevant clinical implications in the field. I have some minor concerns that prevent me from recommending it for publication in its current form. My major concern is related with the data analyses method - I would like the authors provided us with additional information about the method, and how they can guarantee the validity of their results. More specific concerns are detailed below.

Introduction:

The rational for the study is very clearly presented. I would suggest introducing some additional information about the parents' initial emotional reactions to diagnosis in this section, and also about the existing literature on gender similarities and difference on emotional reactions (e.g., Fonseca et al., 2011, Patterns of parental emotional reactions after a pre- or postnatal diagnosis of a congenital anomaly). Some additional information about the challenges of receiving a diagnosis of congenital anomaly (e.g., dealing with complex medical information, need to make a decision, sharing the news with the social network, loss of a healthy baby) will also enhance the introduction section.
Methods:
- This section is very clearly presented. The Study context information is very useful to give the reader with a background about the perinatal care in the context in which data was collected.
- The sample is well described. I do not know if it would be interesting to have information concerning the pregnancy (intended pregnancy? Prior pregnancy complications?) and obstetric history (of the couple). These variables may be relevant in understanding the father's responses.
- Interviews: By seeing the interview content, I do not think that this study intend to assess "the needs of care among this population". The focus of this study is to understand the father's experiences (emotional and cognitive experience) during the diagnosis and decision-making process. I would suggest to reformulate this accordingly.
- Analyses: I think that this section should be presented with more detail. What does exactly mean the expression "the last author became increasingly involved in the analytic process through discussions of the main findings". There is some proportion of the analyses that was also coded by the last author, in order to assess agreement? What were the author's methods to guarantee the validity of the results?

Results:
- I think it would be informative to have some information about the frequency with which each category was presented in the father's discourses. Moreover, these are the major themes or do the authors have identified sub-themes? As I said previously, I would like to know a bitter more about the analytic process.

Discussion:
- I think that the authors discus the study findings well, but I would like to see highlighted the main and innovative contributions of this study. Specifically, the authors should answer to the question: what do this study adds to existing literature?
- In the limitations, please consider if the data analysis method is free of limitations.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.
No

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.
Not relevant to this manuscript

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Needs some language corrections before being published

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