Reviewer’s report

Title: OBSTETRICAL PROVIDER KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS CELL-FREE DNA SCREENING: RESULTS OF A CROSS-SECTIONAL NATIONAL SURVEY.

Version: 0 Date: 01 Feb 2017

Reviewer: MEGAN ALLYSE

Reviewer’s report:

This is a timely study that appropriately examines Canadian obstetric provider knowledge of and opinions about cfDNA screening. I agree that the findings are relevant and of use to stakeholders in the field of prenatal care. A few areas that I think could be improved:

1. It would be useful to international audiences to provide more up front background on the Canadian health system and how OB care is generally delivered. The fact that cfDNA is not included in the standard of care (ie it must be purchased from a commercial provider out of pocket) is a useful frame for the survey itself as this may be relevant to why providers were more or less aware of the screen and its capabilities.

2. Additional information on how the survey was developed would be appropriate. The authors do not discuss which aspects of cfDNA they decided to address and why. Presumably they used some of their own knowledge to assess which elements of cfDNA knowledge were most clinically relevant but this needs more explanation.

3. The authors seem to avoid making affirmative statements about the implications of their results. In the Discussion, they state that the study was not intended as a needs assessment but if this is true, it is not clear what the purpose of the study was. Why assess provider knowledge if you are not going to assert that a) provider knowledge is essential to the ethical and clinically responsible use of cfDNA and b) if there are gaps in knowledge, concrete action is needed to fill them. For instance, the fact that half of the providers surveyed didn't know that maternal weight impacts the efficacy of cfDNA is alarming. While I understand the authors' reluctance to 'call out' their colleagues, a clear call to action would be appropriate.

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?  
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Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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Yes

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I am able to assess the statistics

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