Reviewer’s report

Title: Few women received a specific explanation of stillbirth - an online survey of women’s perceptions and thoughts about the cause of their baby’s death

Version: 2  Date: 07 May 2018

Reviewer: Louise O’Brien

Reviewer's report:

The authors have been mostly responsive to prior critiques. I still have some residual concerns listed below, mainly issues that have not yet been fully addressed by the revised manuscript.

1. 356 women participated and none were excluded. It should be clear that none were excluded (however, that is unusual since women often complete surveys that they are not technically eligible for eg they were 26 or 27 weeks gestation for example). But OK if it's true. More importantly, in the discussion a limitation is that this is only a proportion of the stillbirths that occurred during that time frame and the participants may or may not be representative sample of the true population.

2. I still think that the issue of lack of demographics should be expanded upon. Typically a "Table 1" would include things like maternal age, gestational age, parity etc etc. These are important variables and if they are not available it should be more throughly discussed in context.

3. The limitations section regarding preterm/term and recent/more remote stillbirths is worthy of more detailed discussion. Particularly since parents of more recent stillbirths may not have had/been able to digest all of the information yet. This is touched on but certainly worthy of additional comment.

4. The report of "SIDS" is the perfect example of misperceptions. I understand that the authors are just reporting what the mother said despite that it is highly unlikely any provider would say this. But this issue could be used in the discussion to highlight the point that while maternal report is clearly needed, the lack of correlation with what was actually said is a limitation.

5. Although the authors state that they have now only used "some" and "many" sparingly, these words are not helpful. Please let the reader know the proportion of women who reported the concerns. This will strengthen the manuscript and allow the reader to put things into context. Regarding self blame and blaming staff, it would be very helpful to list this numbers. Readers will want to know this information.
6. The appendices are now improved. In the manuscript it would be helpful to state that 16% of women had multiple reasons for stillbirth

7. The authors added "Other limitations were that women's perceptions of the care that they received were investigated, not necessarily the care that the healthcare staff provided" although I am not entirely sure what this means. Can this be clarified?

**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

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