Reviewer’s report

Title: A qualitative study in parental perceptions and understanding of SIDS-reduction guidance in a UK bi-cultural urban community

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Reviewer: Rosemary S Horne

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BMC Paediatrics Crane and Ball A qualitative study in parental perceptions and understanding of SIDS-reduction guidance in a UK bi-cultural urban community

In this study two groups of mothers were surveyed as to their knowledge and implementation of infant safe sleeping advice. One group of mothers were described as Pakistani and the other as “white British”. The study found that although the mothers were aware of the advice they chose to not follow the advice in certain areas and this was more pronounced in the Pakistani women who felt the advice did not apply to them directly.

Major Issues

1. The sample of mothers interviewed was selected from the Born in Bradford cohort. 137 mothers were initially approached however only 25 white British and 21 Pakistani mothers took part in the study. There is no indication of any sample size calculation and the numbers of participants are further reduced by the fact that 5 of the Pakistani women interviewed were born in Pakistan and 16 were born in the UK. This may have made a difference to the responses received but the small sample size did not allow this to be investigated.

2. The terms used to define the two groups are confusing as presumably all the women interviewed were British. Ethnicity would be better described as Caucasian and Pakistani.

3. There is no description of what questions the mothers were asked to ascertain their knowledge of infant safe sleeping. Method of feeding does not seem to have been included despite this being listed on the Lullaby trust website as protective. A table of the questions would be useful and this could replace table 2. It is unclear why questions about baby intercom systems and temperature monitors were asked as these are not mentioned in the safe sleep brochure on the Lullaby trust website. Were mothers asked about the use of dummies?

4. It would be important to know the method of feeding of the babies and how many children the mothers had had – were the groups matched for this?

5. No rationale is provided for the infant age at which interviews were conducted.

6. Discussion page 10/11. All Pakistani babies were slept supine and none of the mothers smoked or consumed alcohol and all infants slept in the parental
bedroom. This should be highlighted as the mothers were doing the correct things regardless of the advice, this would contribute to them feeling the UK safe sleeping guidelines were not relevant to them.

7. Page 12 It is rather a strong statement to say that a “single simple message” is now ineffective as all the mothers were aware of the safe sleeping advice so the message is getting out. In this one disadvantaged community the messages were not completely understood – which may have been due to lack of education or how the messages were explained to the mothers. This study should be repeated in a different sociodemographic area.

Minor comments.

1. In the introduction there is confusion between the use of SIDS which is unexplained and SUDI which includes SIDS and sleeping accidents. The term used more commonly now is SUDI.

2. Page 3 line 59 supine sleep should be prone sleep.

3. A brief description of the COREQ would be helpful.

4. Page 6 many readers will be unfamiliar with the Pakistani use of infant pillows and the description on page 10 should be put here. I am still unclear exactly what they are. Are they used to keep the baby supine? Why would they pose no danger to the infant?

5. Page 9 line 203 This sheds an interesting....