Reviewer’s report

Title: Ethical aspects of diagnosis and interventions for children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and their families

Version: 0 Date: 11 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Merle Spriggs

Reviewer’s report:

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This paper which is about the controversy around diagnosing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and the value of interventions for children and families is interesting and highly informative.

Nevertheless, the method section is vague and lacks detail. A stand-alone paper requires a certain amount of information for the reader to understand what the research entails and how the conclusions have been arrived at.

* This research is described as 'part of a health technology assessment'. What does that mean and what does it entail? It is said to be based on published literature as well as discussion with experts in the field and a reference group of medical ethicists’. It would be good to have some basic details about the experts in the field and the medical ethicists and the numbers taking part? What role did these groups have and what form did the discussions take? Was this formal research or informal discussions? Or, are the groups described actually the authors of the paper? Please clarify.

* Given the lack of detail, it is problematic that the discussion does not distinguish between what is in the literature and what comes from discussions with the expert group or the reference group e.g. p. 5 lists 'potential advantages of FASD-related diagnostics', citing a group of four references covering eight dot points that follow. Individual dot points are not referenced.

* It would be good to have some information about the inclusion and exclusion criteria resulting in 39 articles from the 430 potentially relevant abstracts that were included in the ethical analysis.

* What is the SBU council?

* What is the FASD project group? What is its connection to this paper?
* Please explain the 'guidance for systematic identification of ethical aspects of healthcare technologies' that was 'used as an additional support'.

The paper's conclusion is somewhat imprecise. It could be more explicit as it is in the abstract.

**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.

Unable to assess

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
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Unable to assess

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Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Acceptable

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