Reviewer’s report

Title: ASSESSING QUALITY OF MATERNITY CARE IN HUNGARY: EXPERT VALIDATION AND TESTING OF THE MOTHER-CENTERED PRENATAL CARE (MCPC) SURVEY INSTRUMENT.

Version: 0 Date: 30 Jul 2017

Reviewer: E Miteniece

Reviewer's report:

First of all, I highly appreciate your attempt to develop such study, because receiving good quality maternal care is an important topic in CEE region. I also do appreciate that you highlight the limitations of the existing data in this field and how difficult is to draw conclusions based on the limited evidence. Therefore, the survey you developed adds a lot for the future research on maternity care in CEE and options for a better cross-country comparison.

- Under strengths (lines 45-48) you claim that no other survey has assessed informal payments and quality of maternal care, which is true, you can perhaps acknowledge other approaches so far (e.g. reference nr. 15 from your list). Furthermore, it does not seem that there is an actual analysis and exploration of the informal payments in maternal care and how it affects maternal care quality in Hungary.

- Background: Please define what you mean by quality care in this research. I believe women-centred care is one of the requirements and if so then what it involves.

- Background (Lines 29-33): besides the aspects of care mentioned I would like to add here by drawing your attention to the societal aspect. Women themselves play an important role in prioritising good care during her pregnancy (including lifestyle and health literacy), facilitates communication between her and provider and finally resulting in (good) health outcomes. Furthermore, affordability of care (official + informal payments) and the distance/costs to the necessary care unit are important aspects of receiving good quality care.

- Background (Line 58-60): not sure if informal payments cause unnecessary procedures, I would rather believe that this is a cause of fee-for-service official payment scheme.

- Methods Line 15-16: Regards to experts: what was the acceptance rate to participate and how (with what methods) you approached/chose the experts?

- Methods Line 28-29: you mention open ended question, but on what? For the rest, you explained on what the other questions were.

- Methods Line 33-35: Explain in few words what the 5-way translation entails here.
- Methods Line 46-48: You say that Ipsos delivered a 100-question survey, isn't it 112?

- Methods Line 32-61: You say Ipsos sent invitation to 600 women (how approached? Where got them? How many were asked to participate in total since 600 is the final number, which areas were targeted?)

- Background/Results: I miss a short description of Hungarian maternal care system. Such as, if a woman is pregnant what are her option, where is she going, who is taking care of her, where is she delivering, who is paying for care etc. It is important to understand where the informal payments fit in the system and how they arise.

- Results: Table 3 says that around 300 answered, but you had in total 600 participants, maybe you can explain why the others were excluded.

- Results Line 9-37: Interpret/explain what actually the test shows in those differences with regards to informal payments and good quality maternal care

- Results: Table 5: N=1.015 in the text is correct but you have typo in the Table (N=1.1015)

- Discussion Line 15-30: More interpretation of the % of women who paid informally.

- Discussion Line 40-42: How was the qualitative data analysed?

- Discussion Line 44-46: What did you find out of the 64%?

- Discussion Line 46-59: Make sure it is clear that you did not do the systematic review here, but it does reflect your findings.

- Discussion Line 60-11 next page: similar as previously, be more explicit if the information is so in those studies cited or they reflect and how reflect your findings.

- Conclusion: I am missing here future perspective (besides the survey available). Are there any plans yet to run this survey on a bigger scale in the context of Hungary since it was piloted there? Furthermore, mention concluding remarks of findings related to informal payments in quality maternal care. This kind of study adds a lot in this field, so final remarks should be emphasised.

- Pay attention to typos and abbreviations used inside and outside the tables.

Double check the references, order them and make sure the reference list matches with citations in text and it is done accurately. Example: Miteniece et al.

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An article of importance in its field
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