

Author's response to reviews

Title: Establishing normal ranges for fetal electrocardiogram values for the healthy fetus of 18-22 weeks of gestation: a prospective cohort study

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Author's response to reviews: see over

To: Editor BMC Pregnancy & Childbirth
From: Kim M.J. Verdurmen
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Veldhoven, 11th of April 2016

Dear editor,

Thank you for your response on our manuscript MS: 2066045883168059 entitled: "Normal ranges for fetal electrocardiogram values for the healthy fetus of 18-24 weeks of gestation: a prospective cohort study". We are very pleased with the comments of the reviewer. With pleasure we would like to answer your questions.

1. Consent to Publish:

We obtained consent for publication from the patient that is photographed in Figure 1 and added this section in our manuscript (line 168).

2. Ethical and Funding Approval Documentation:

Copies of all ethical approval, including an English version of the relevant parts, were sent as email attachment to BMCSeriesEditorial@biomedcentral.com on the 11th of November 2015. No additional changes were made since.

2. Funding:

No external or commercial funding.

3. Study status:

This study is still ongoing: we are still collecting data and we have not started with analysing the data.

4. Related articles:

There are no publications containing the results of this study that have been published or submitted to any journal.

We have read the comments of the reviewer carefully, and we have adjusted the manuscript accordingly. We hope that the adjustments make this paper suitable for publication in BMC Pregnancy

& Childbirth, and we are looking forward to your decision. We hope that this additional information is sufficient in answering your questions.

Yours sincerely, on behalf of all the authors,

Kim Verdurmen, MD

Guid Oei, MD, PhD

Reviewers' Comments to Author:

The authors answered all the comments and questions.

I have no further comments.

We would like to thank the reviewer for this positive feedback.

Two suggestions tough:

1) consider rephrase of sentence P7L156: "However, statistical experts calculated we need ..." -> However, statistical experts calculated that we need....?

We agree with the reviewer and adjusted this sentence (line 155).

2) P10, sec. Study parameters, consider to include 95% CI

The list would read, e.g. Fetal heart rate, mean (95% CI), standard deviation

We agree with the reviewer and adjusted this in the section "Study parameters" (lines 227, 229-232)

Comments of the Authors:

We added Professor Dr. Tammo Delhaas as an author, since his contribution to this study protocol has been growing since the initial submission. He is added on the title list (Page 1, line 8), and in the section Authors' Contributions (line 290-291).

On page 10, line 223, we changed the sentence "The recording must contain a minimum of 200 ECG complexes that were assessed to have good signal quality and that were recorded within a time frame of maximally 5 minutes." into "The recording must contain a minimum of 200 ECG complexes that were assessed to have good signal quality and that were corrected for fetal movement [27]." since this is a more accurate description of the study procedure.