Author's response to reviews

Title: Congenital Abnormalities and Multiple Sclerosis

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Angelina,

Thank you for your e-mail, detailing the comments from the reviewers. We thank the reviewers for their helpful and constructive comments and respond to their comments in turn (our responses are italicized).

Editorial comment-

Ethics - Experimental research that is reported in the manuscript must have been performed with the approval of an appropriate ethics committee. Research carried out on humans must be in compliance with the Helsinki Declaration (http://www.wma.net/en/30publications/10policies/b3/index.html), and any experimental research on animals must follow internationally recognized guidelines. A statement to this effect must appear in the Methods section of the manuscript, including the name of the body which gave approval, with a reference number where appropriate.

We have added the following into the manuscript- “Each participating CCPGSMS site has obtained ethical approval from the relevant institutional review board. The entire project was reviewed and approved by the University of British Columbia in compliance with the Helsinki Declaration.”
Reviewer 1

Major Compulsory Revisions

Results are not completely appropriate as authors did not report about cases of abortion, stillbirths or perinatal death. Although reasons for this limitation are clearly stated in the Discussion section, I think this missing information is crucial in order to decide on whether or not congenital anomalies are associated to MS. In this light, discussion and conclusions are not adequately supported by the data.

We acknowledge this important point and have included this in the discussion “We also did not ask about the maternal history of fatal congenital anomalies in previous pregnancies; this information would be missing from the family history especially if an affected pregnancy resulted in a termination, miscarriage, stillbirth, or perinatal death. We anticipate conducting a more focused questionnaire interview in the future as part of the ongoing CCPGSMS.” We hope to ask this question in phase 6 of the CCPGSMS but this will take years to complete and we feel it is out of scope of the present study.

Minor Essential revision

A table could be of help to the reader

We have added a table listing the clinical and demographic details of our cohort.

We would be grateful if the Journal would reconsider the revised manuscript addressing the reviewers’ comments. Thank you very much for your consideration.

We look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

Sreeram Ramagopalan
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