Author's response to reviews

Title: Preterm birth and reduced birthweight in first and second teenage pregnancies: a register-based cohort study

Authors:

Ali S Khashan (a.khashan@ucc.ie)  
Philip N Baker (philipbaker@med.ualberta.ca)  
Louise C Kenny (l.kenny@ucc.ie)

Version: 3 Date: 9 May 2010

Author's response to reviews:

Dear Dr. Marshall,

Thank you for your interest in our work and for your and the Associate Editor's helpful comments. We have addressed the three issues raised and in particular we have provided more details about the permissions we have to conduct the study. We are happy with your plan to issue a press release. Please find our responses below. In addition we have used "Track Changes" for the changes in the Manuscript. All co-authors have read and approved these changes.

Thanks again for you interest in our work and we look forward to reading the paper in BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth.

Ali Khashan, PhD (on behalf of all authors)
Anu Research Centre
Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology
University College Cork
Cork
Ireland
Tel: +353214205031

Comment 1: I think the wording on page 4 is a little clumsy and could be changed from? In England and Wales, the rate (rate per 1000 women aged under 20) of conceptions to women aged under 20 was 60.0 in 2007?.? ? to ?In England and Wales, the rate of conceptions per 1000 women aged under 20 was 60.0 in 2007??

Response 1: Done

Comment 2: On page 8: after ?The present study used completely anonymous data and it is not possible to identify participants from any resulting report? add ??, therefore no ethical approval was required.?

Response 2: Done
Response 2: We have modified the statement as requested. The following details may be helpful in clearing the issue of permissions.

Data collected by the North Western Perinatal Survey Unit provides an ongoing surveillance of perinatal activity in the region it serves. The NWPS is authorised by the strategic Health Authority to collect perinatal data at all of the hospitals in North Western Region of England. The data collection process observes Data Protection regulations and Caldecott Principals which are in place in NHS organisations. The survey is published annually and widely distributed to all stakeholders and other interested parties. Copies of the report are available on request and if required we would be happy to supply a hard copy of most recent report (2008).

The present study used anonymised data and it is not possible to identify participants. The director of the NWPS gave permission to conduct this study. Thus ethical approval was neither required nor requested.

In addition to the statement it may be worth noting that we published a study on maternal body mass index and adverse pregnancy outcome last year from the same data and under the same conditions (Khashan & Kenny. The effects of maternal body mass index on pregnancy outcome. Eur J Epidemiol 2009; 24(11): 697- 705.

Comment 3: On page 14 under ?authors? contributions?: ?3) all co-authors approved the submission of this version of the manuscript to? ? remove ?to? and put a full stop. Also, under Acknowledgements?: ? We thank Ms Cathie Forest from the North Western Perinatal Survey (University of Manchester) for their assistance in providing the data.? ? should be changed to ?her? assistance.

Response 3: Done