Reviewer's report

Title: Growth factor concentrations and their placental mRNA expression are modulated in gestational diabetes mellitus: possible interactions with macrosomia

Version: 3 Date: 22 September 2009

Reviewer: K.S. Joseph

Reviewer's report:

1. Dr. Lindsay requested a multivariable analysis to identify which growth factors were responsible for excessive fetal growth. The authors have responded by providing a few correlation coefficients which have been presented in the Discussion section. However, this is not what was requested by the Reviewer. Although, as the Reviewer mentioned, the small study size may preclude a multivariable analysis, it is definitely worth attempting to identify independent factors associated with excessive fetal growth. Such an analysis would be based on 60 subjects (not 30 as in the correlation analyses done by the authors). Additionally, the authors should present their analyses in the form of 1 or 2 additional Tables in the Results section (I don't believe the Journal restricts manuscripts to a single Table).

2. In Dr. Lindsay's opinion, much of the literature review was selective and he requested that the findings of contradictory studies be mentioned as well. The authors have responded by stating that they chose to ignore the conflicting studies because of the difficulty in interpreting such results. This does not seem to be an appropriate response. The authors should acknowledge the complexity and problematic nature of the situation by mentioning both the findings that are consistent with their results and those studies which show contradictory results.

Other points

1. All abbreviations to be expanded at first use eg GH, LSD test, etc.
2. Definition of ponderal index - is the denominator birth length squared or birth length cubed?
3. Page 7, Serum biochemical parameters ".....uric acid concentrations increased in GDM mothers."

This statement contradicts Table 1 which shows no statistically significant difference. The sentence and the reference to preeclampsia should be deleted.