Author's response to reviews

Title: Perception and practice of Kangaroo Mother Care after discharge from hospital in Kumasi, Ghana: A longitudinal study.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
The Editor

BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth

Dear Sir/Madam,

Submission of revised research article entitled “Perception and practice of Kangaroo Mother Care after discharge from hospital in Kumasi, Ghana: A longitudinal study.”

Dear Sir,

We are thankful for the efforts the reviewers and yourself have put into reviewing this research article. We have gone through all the additional comments and adjusted our article and tables to reflect all of them accordingly. The various comments and the effected changes are as below. The comments below include the previous (in red with plain background) as well as the current outstanding ones (in red with highlighted in yellow background).

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

Dr Samuel Blay Nguah
(BSc MB ChB FWACP)
**Reviewer:** Socorro De Leon-Mendoza  
**Version:** 2  
**Date:** 28 September 2011

**Introduction**
Please rephrase. Did you mean a paucity of data on the impact of potentially relevant interventions for the prevention and management of preterm births?  
*This change has been effected*

**Methods**
Suggest you to just document the functioning equipment  
*This has been done*

Average number of hours?  
*This change has been effected with “few” being changed to “four to six”*

Is this standard protocol for both hospitals? Please indicate average discharge weight and average follow-up rate for specific weight groups before the study was conducted. This is to impress upon the reader whether the conduct of the study itself actually improved follow-up rates or not.  
*This is standard but the averages are not available because of poor record keeping.*

**Results**
How many babies did not have their mothers to receive training and give consent and indicate why? Or should the statement read mother and/or legal guardian? This is impt because you are studying “perception and practice” and the legal guardian may significantly differ from that of the mother.  
*All babies had their mothers available to consent. The wording of this has been changed to reflect it.*

*Since all mothers were available to consent, then a statement in the results should state that, even if the method said mother or legal guardian*
*This has been inserted*

Besides experience, Is the nurse trained in KMC as well? Was she the only one training all the mothers recruited in the study?  
*Yes she is. The wording has been changed to reflect this.*

Why was a written consent not possible? Even if the ERB gave approval, it would be useful to indicate the reason for verbal instead of written consent.  
*The explanation to this has been added to the text of the article.*

Please indicate the rationale why this strategy was chosen  
*A sentence indicating why the strategy was chosen has been added to the text.*

While in hospital at SGH? Table 1 does not support this statement.  
*Absolute numbers have been added to clarify this and make it easy to relate to what is in the table 1.*
These data should be in tabular form: Birth data, Recruitment data and Discharge data of both neonate and mother, as outlined in the study method. This is essential, since analysis of followup data has been weight-adjusted.

We are of the opinion that getting this relatively unrelated information into a tabular form will be very difficult. Also this information does not reflect the main objective hence we think it could still be in the text of the results.

The methodology outlined that these data were obtained at birth, at recruitment, at discharge and follow-up. If these are unrelated information, why were they obtained in the first place, and why are comments regarding these data stated, in the second place? If they were truly obtained as stated in the methodology, I do not understand why it will be very difficult. I agree that it is not part of the objective, but it was included in the method, the results discussed and even included in the conclusion.

Table 2 has been created and added to reflect these. Also table 4 has been expanded by adding the summary of the review weights.

It is important to include data regarding baby’s growth parameters during follow-up visits to support/not support the continued practice of KMC after discharge, as stated in the introduction.

The data is presented in the last two paragraphs of the results section.

Discussion

Please rephrase this statement. Perhaps you might say, “Whereas giving water and other feedings are discouraged during breastfeeding, the few mothers who continued to do so at Discharge (3.3%) subsequently discontinued the practice on follow-up visits and counselling (0.3%)”

This has been effected

Please rephrase. Suggest: In KMC, very high exclusive….

This change has been effected

Were there other reasons in this statement further and which outcome measures support this statement in weight gain, since you included given by the mothers? This is to support the preceding statement of KMC being beneficial to them

This comment has been removed as it is not supported by our data

Other growth parameters should be included in the data (comment #14) to support this statement

Unfortunately we do not have other growth parameters as that was not our primary objective. We have therefore removed this statement from the conclusion

Please explain this statement further and which outcome measures support this statement.

The statement has been removed from the conclusion
Reviewer: Suzanne Penfold
Version: 2 Date: 28 September 2011
The comments in my first review have been adequately addressed. I have one additional minor essential revision:
You say in the discussion 'KMC has very high exclusive breastfeeding rates' and suggest that exclusive breastfeeding is uncommon among LBW infants. These ideally need references. References have been added
Reviewer: Ekawaty Lutfia L Haksari
Version: 2 Date: 5 October 2011

Abstract
Some sentences are too long.
We have done our best to reduce the length of some of the long sentences.

There aren’t key words in the abstract. (They should include the following phrases: Kangaroo Mother care, Low birth weight, follow-up, practice, after discharge).
The editor has advised that this was not be included after I presented the first script.

The objective of the study stated in the abstract should be made the same as that in the article (To evaluate the practice KMC initiated in the hospital and after discharge without active supervision by health personnel or strict adherence to a study protocol).
This has been modified accordingly

Introduction
Should be shorter. Some sentences were repeated, it should be in 1 sentence with some references. It is not necessary to repeat information in the narration
A few sentences that may indicate restating of information in different sentences have been changed or deleted

To focus on perception and practice of KMC after discharge
Thank you for this suggestion. However, we are of the opinion that KMC is among the most important but not widely known intervention. We therefore took the opportunity to elaborate very little about other aspect so readers not very conversant with it would appreciate the article as well.

Methods
Continuous and intermittent KMC should be compared.
Thank you for this suggestion as well. Unfortunately this was not our aim from the beginning hence the study design as well as the sample size were not determined with these in mind. We are therefore of the opinion that using our current data to determine this will be improper.

Results
There should be more informative description by table: Data when entering the study (mean birth weight, gestational age, age starting KMC) and information about 2 groups
We have added table 2 which summarizes the information

What has been in the table should not have been explained in the result
These have been adjusted to reflect only figures not directly in the table or highlight specific portions of the figures in the tables.

Discussion
Some points did not support the data in the result
Not well-managed, too long, confusing
Thank you for noticing this. However we would be very glad if you could be more specific so we can make the necessary adjustments.

Conclusion
Should be shorter to answer the objective
Some information was not appropriate
Just as previously, we would appreciate if this statement is a bit specific to guide us make adjustment to the conclusion.