Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 1 Date: 2 August 2011

Reviewer: Suzanne Penfold

Reviewer’s report:

Overall, I think this paper is nicely written and presented, contains sufficient detail, appropriate analysis and fully informs the reader. My comments mainly reflect areas that I think needs tightening up, rather than flaws with the methods, findings or discussion, i.e. so that the conclusion and discussion better reflect the results, and the results clearly address the aim of the study.

Major compulsory revisions

1. The aim differs between the abstract and main text, and the wording is unclear. The aim needs to be clarified.

2. In the methods it would be useful to know what aspects are usual KMC, and what aspects are additional for the purposes of this study

3. The hypothesised/desired direction of effect the measures taken is different, and should be presented in three groups:
   a. measures that start off high that want to be maintained
   b. measures that are not high at the beginning that want to be improved
   c. measures that are low at the beginning that want to be kept at low levels or reduced further

4. There is too much discussion that refers to data not presented in the results. If there are qualitative data these could be worth presenting in the results. If not, the discussion of such data should be kept to a minimum.

5. Given that the aim of the study was to evaluate the practice of KMC following discharge from hospital, there seems to be quite a lot of discussion/emphasis on mothers pre-existing knowledge of KMC - this should be reduced

6. The limitations of the study should include that the generalisability of the study is limited by the extra effort made to follow up women following discharge from hospital, which may help to maintain KMC practice more than would happen with normal follow up (the content of this limitation is dependent on the changes made to the methods suggested in point 3)

7. The conclusion is too much a summary of the results. The conclusion needs to say what the study findings mean

Minor essential revisions

1. Title should be changed to 'longitudinal study', not 'follow-up study'
2. Spell out LBW at first use in main text
3. Don’t forget to mention the strengths of the study in the discussion! E.g. low loss to follow up
4. introduction, line 18 - this sentence about KMC is not quite correct. You need to say ‘encouraging exclusive breastfeeding’, and ‘facilitating early discharge from hospital’ (and explain how).
5. Methods, study procedure - please delete the second sentence (the study should be fully explained to every potential participant, not just those participating - this is already covered under study population)
6. results, first sentence - please delete ‘non-acutely ill newborns’ as this is explained in the next sentence.

Discretionary revisions
1. Introduction, last line page 1 - can you describe how long KMC is usually carried out in hospital?

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

Dr Joy Lawn is a member of the technical advisory group for the project I am currently running in Tanzania.