Reviewer’s report

Title: Cocaine use during pregnancy assessed by hair analysis in a Canary Islands cohort

Version: 2 Date: 29 July 2011

Reviewer: maria falcon romero

Reviewer’s report:

1. Authors could shorten the manuscript without compromising the message. Discretionary Revision

2. They must emphasize the importance of results for public health and suggest some actions in order to know about prevalence of prenatal exposure to drugs of abuse in other areas, how to implement screening programs (costs) and how to avoid consumption during pregnancy (brief intervention). Discretionary Revision

3. It will be interesting to know the amount of women who denied to be sampled. Major Compulsory Revisions

4. Authors should highlight that they analyze 3 cm of hair that correspond to the last three months of pregnancy, they are not assessing exposure during 1º/2º trimester. This is important because pregnant woman usually try to reduce consumption in late pregnancy and maybe the prevalence of prenatal exposed children is even higher. Discretionary Revision

5. It will be also be interesting to discuss the special characteristics of hair related to detect the different drugs (cocaine for example is easier to found than cannabis). Discretionary Revision

6. I can’t see cannabis in the immunoanalysis screening method, was the screening done for cannabis? Were all the samples directly analyzed by GC/MS? This point needs further clarification. Major Compulsory Revision

7. There isn’t only one study in Spain reporting drug consumption during pregnancy, see Falcon et al. Exposure to psychoactive substances in women who request voluntary termination of pregnancy assessed by serum and hair testing. Forensic Sci Int 196 2010. Discretionary Revision

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests' below