Reviewer’s report

Title: Ethnic differences translate to inadequacy of high-risk screening for gestational diabetes mellitus in an Asian population: a cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 27 May 2014

Reviewer: Marianna Karachaliou

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Background-4th paragraph & Results-paragraph 2 & Table 2: The use of word prevalence here leads to misunderstandings. Use instead number/proportion.
2. Methods-1st paragraph: Please clarify in the description of your population whether you included multiple pregnancies and also whether one woman participates with more than one pregnancy.
3. Methods-2nd paragraph: Regarding the criteria for defining GDM after a 75g OGTT, WHO has revised the cut-offs in 2013. Please clarify why you selected those of 1999 for defining GDM.
5. Results-paragraph 1: Enrich according to the results in table 1 (see below the suggestion for revising).
6. Results-paragraphs 2: Exclude word only (“only 495 of the 1136 participants”)—it is better not to make comments on this section.
7. Table 1 suggestion for revising.
8. Table 2-1st column: Add footnote on how you define universal screening and how high-risk. So far in the table 2, there is a definition only for high-risk screening but it should be clear that is a two-step approach: NICE risk factors+OGTT.
9. Table 2- footnote: Exclude #dds ratios from this table and present them (unadjusted and adjusted) on a supplementary table. Please clarify what these odds ratios are for. I expect to see an OR for high-risk screening. Please mention on the footnote the covariates that you adjust for.
10. Table 3. Add a last model for high-risk screening to present the OR for each ethnic group (unadjusted).

Suggestion for supplementary table 1s. Please add a supplementary table where true positive, false positive, true negative and false negative values are presented. Refer to sensitivity and specificity of selective screening in the text.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Background-1st paragraph:
I would suggest not naming the development of GDM as a biomarker. See the definitions of a biomarker a) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/mesh?term=biomarker, b) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biomarker_(medicine)

Discretionary Revisions
1. Background-2nd paragraph: I would suggest that you include a more general reference for risk factors of GDM development together with or instead of ref 11. Please use review papers, meta-analysis or opinions from committees, task forces etc
2. Background-3rd paragraph: Please refer to the organizations that recommend selective screening (e.g. NICE) or universal screening.
3. Results: Repeat analysis in order to evaluate also risk factors i) BMI>25 kg/m2 instead of BMI >30kg/m2, ii) age>25 years.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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