Reviewer's report

Title: Assessing fetal growth impairments based on family data as a tool for identifying high-risk babies. An example with neonatal mortality

Version: 3 Date: 26 September 2007

Reviewer: Russell Kirby

Reviewer's report:

General

In this revised version, the authors have addressed substantially all major issues. Only a few minor suggested changes remain.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

None noted.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

On Figures 1 and 2, the authors misunderstood this reviewer’s comment. Instead of '2.nd', replace with 'second' and instead of '1.st', replace with 'first'.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

On p 7, where the authors discuss mixture modeling, were any attempts to fit mixture models with more than two components made? This reviewer is working with a group that has used US national data and has a manuscript showing that for most populations, four component mixture models give a better fit to the data than do two component models. Given that this is an emerging area of research, the authors needn't change their text in responding to this question, but in the interest of science this reviewer would like to know if this was considered.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'