Author's response to reviews

Title: Centile Charts for Birthweight for Gestational Age for Scottish Singleton Births

Authors:

  Sandra Bonellie (S.Bonellie@napier.ac.uk)
  James Chalmers (Jim.Chalmers@isd.csa.scot.nhs.uk)
  Ron Gray (Ron.Gray@npeu.ox.ac.uk)
  Ian Greer (hysig@hymn.ac.uk)
  Stephen Jarvis (s.n.jarvis@ncl.ac.uk)
  Claire Williams (cwillia2@staffmail.ed.ac.uk)

Version: 3  Date: 23 December 2007

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Sir,

Centile Charts for Birthweight for Gestational Age for Scottish Singleton Births

I am resubmitting the above paper for your consideration for online publication in the journal BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth.

We have made the following changes in response to the reviewer’s comments.

Reviewer 1

- Page 4. The description of how gestational age is measured has been expanded to make clear it is a clinicians estimate based on a combination of ultrasound and other information including date of the last menstrual period.
- Page 6 and 14. Birthweight has been added to table heading and description in text.
- Page 7. The phrase ‘of neonatal or postnatal morbidity’ has been added after ‘which babies may be at higher risk.’
- Figures 2a and 2b put into one file to correct the numbering problem.
- Discussion on use of customised centiles added together with a justification for the need of centile charts such as these for use in epidemiological studies.

Reviewer 2

- The abstract has been revised as suggested.
- Comments on values of S and L have been added.
- Comments on use of Tukey’s method have been added.
- The section on use of most current years has been reworded to take these comments into account. The paper now acknowledges that the increase in
birthweight appears to have levelled off since 1998 and the centiles based on data from 2002-2003 are therefore still of use. A sentence has also been added stressing the need to monitor the behaviour of birthweight so that charts can be updated when necessary.

- The word ‘Second’ has been removed from start of the paragraph of page 5 and the word ‘First’ removed from previous paragraph.

- Comment on using values of M(t) etc for appropriate sex and parity groupings has been added.

- The word ‘Restriction’ on page 8 has been added.

- From the census data, the proportion of women of child-bearing age is just above 2%. This information has been added.

- The references have been re-formatted.

- The legend for figure 6 has been corrected.

- Text has been added to table 1 to make it clear that the means and standard deviations have been calculated after the removal of outliers.

- Mean and M values have been rounded to integers in all the tables.

I confirm that my fellow authors are in agreement with the changes made to the paper.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Sandra Bonellie,
Lecturer in Statistics.