Reviewer’s report

Title: Asthma in Black African, Black Caribbean and South Asian adolescents in the MRC DASH study: a cross sectional analysis.

Version: 1 Date: 1 May 2009

Reviewer: Gopal Netuveli

Reviewer’s report:

This is an important research report which can add to the scant literature on ethnicity and asthma in the UK. The authors have written up their results well with relevant papers cited and a discussion which is balanced.

- Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Exclusion of 1853 children from the analysis because of other mixed ethnicity and other ethnicity results in the loss of more than 30% of the sample. The least that could be done is to examine the impact of this exclusion by running the analyses considering the excluded cases as a separate category in the ethnicity variable.

2. The authors have not taken into account the multilevel nature of the data. Pupils will be clustered within schools and probably schools might differ in their ethnic compositions. So the school level clustering is important and should be accounted for. A result of doing that would be to widen some of the confidence intervals currently reported. This might change some of the reported results. For example significance of Bangladeshi and Mixed ethnic group differences with White UK may change.

When resubmitting the authors may want to look at:


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'