Reviewer’s report

Title: Factors associated with breastfeeding cessation in nursing mothers in a peer support programme in Eastern Lancashire

Version: 2 Date: 30 April 2009

Reviewer: Jane Scott

Reviewer’s report:

Factors associated with breastfeeding cessation in nursing mothers in a peer support programme in East Lancashire (version 2)

I have read the revised version of this paper and am satisfied that most of my initial minor concerns have been addressed.

1. However, my primary concern over the soundness of the data as a result of breastfeeding duration being censored for more than half of the sample remains. While the authors state that the statistics were reviewed by a statistician and adjudged to be acceptable I would have appreciated a more detailed justification from the statistician and response to my initial concern as to how the censoring of such a large number of subjects at three time points is likely to affect the mean and median duration. There are obvious implications for “clumping” of data around the time points of 6 weeks, 17 weeks and 6 months, which is likely to contribute to the skewness of mean duration of breastfeeding referred to on page 3.

2. In relation to this, on page 12 the authors indicate that a limitation of the study was the accuracy of the estimated breastfeeding duration based on self-reported dates of breastfeeding cessation. There is evidence that maternal recall of feeding events over a short recall period such as 6 months is reasonably accurate. I think a much greater limitation is NOT that breastfeeding duration was estimated from self-reported data from mothers but that duration of breastfeeding for 53.6% of women was estimated based on the last known feeding method.

I think that the paper should either be independently reviewed by a statistician or that the authors should have their statistical advisor provide a detailed response justifying the censoring of so much data and clarifying the effect, if any, on the mean and median duration of breastfeeding.

There are a few remaining minor errors

3. In the abstract the bracketed range for mean duration of breastfeeding does not indicate that this is the 95% CI (95% CI 20.86 to 22.37).

4. Table 2
P values need to be rounded to 4 decimal places for exclusively formula fed at 17 weeks and breast and solid fed at 6 months.
**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare I have no competing interests.