Reviewer's report

Title: Gastroesophageal reflux symptoms in infants in a rural population: longitudinal data over the first six months

Version: 1 Date: 31 October 2009

Reviewer: V Khoshoo

Reviewer's report:

1. It is an interesting paper that complements the work of Nelson et al. Though the numbers are much smaller but the patient selection (consecutively selected patients as a prospective cohort and a homogenous population) has far less bias than Nelsons patients selected from 13 different practices.

2. My major problem is with the length of the paper making large portions very redundant. Brevity is important for the readership. The length can be shortened without compromising quality or the message. I recommend that cut background by 40-50% and cut discussion by 50-60%. Keep the message very clear i.e. almost all infants with symptoms of 'GER' will get better with time. This is important since most infants with GER and treated unnecessarily. And we have shown that (Pediatrics 2007;120:9460.

3. There are too many tables and figures. Some of them can be incorporated in the text esp table 1. Others have essentially the same message esp table 2,3,fig 1,2,3. This could be streamlined. I like table 4, keep it.

4. It seems that maybe barring 1-2 infants, none of the infants ever had a significant IGERQ-R suggestive to GERD (i.e. > 15). This needs to be pointed out explicitly and percentages given.

5. Breast feeding data needs to be provided and correlated with scores

6. In some of the comparisons, comparing group means may not be entirely valid since patients serve as their own controls over time.

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:

No to all