Reviewer's report

Title: Determinants of rapid weight gain during infancy: baseline results from the NOURISH randomised controlled trial.

Version: 2 Date: 29 July 2011

Reviewer: Mandy Belfort

Reviewer's report:

The authors have substantially improved this version of the manuscript.

Major essential revisions:
Regarding the authors' response to my previous comment, “Please clarify that this is a cross sectional study …”
The authors obtained the data regarding the exposure (infant feeding practices) and the infant weight at the same follow-up visit. The infant weight is a key component of weight gain, the outcome. Because the exposure does not precede the outcome, this is not strictly a longitudinal design. This is an important distinction in interpreting the findings because causation in either direction is possible – feeding practices may have influenced weight gain, or weight gain may have influenced feeding practice (reverse causation). The authors should make this clear in the paper, and should also report the time referent for the infant feeding questions.

For most of the analyses, the authors report feeding of solid foods at the time of assessment, but they also appear to have data on feeding solid foods <4 months, which is a more consistent time point across subjects, and more relevant to other literature on this topic. Why not perform all analyses with the variable feeding solid foods <4 months?

Minor essential revisions:
(1) Data collection, 1st para. Please clarify what is meant by “a critical subset” and “willing non-consenters.”
(2) Outcome variables, 2nd sentence, typo: “ascrossing”
(3) Statistical analyses, last sentence, typo: “continuousvariables”
(4) Ethics, state whether informed consent was obtained

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.