Reviewer's report

Title: Longitudinal patterns of poverty and health in early childhood: Exploring the influence of concurrent, previous, and cumulative poverty on child health outcomes

Version: 2 Date: 24 November 2011

Reviewer: Anita Kozyrskyj

Reviewer's report:

The authors have appropriately addressed all of the reviewer comments and my concern in particular, by describing their outcome measure as asthma-like attacks and citing the literature on preschool wheeze. The reporting of results is more clear and the discussion does a better job of highlighting the findings. However, since the authors have now elected to focus on asthma-like wheeze as their prime outcome, the introduction requires reframing. First, one needs to report on the burden of childhood asthma rather than talking about child health in general or mental health in particular. Second, I disagree with the statement that there is a "dearth" of literature on income dynamics and child asthma. Dearth suggests no papers or some employing methods that are remotely related. There are at least 2 income dynamics and asthma papers, Chen and mine (which were cited), and mine which utilizes a similar trajectory analysis approach that needs to be noted. And there is a ton of literature on static measures of SES and child asthma. The discussion also requires an offering of plausible mechanisms behind persistent poverty and asthma-like wheeze in children. Although I would categorize these as major compulsory revisions, they should be straightforward to implement.

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'