Reviewer's report

Title: Reducing neonatal infections in south and south central Vietnam: the views of health caregivers

Version: 2 Date: 11 January 2013

Reviewer: Fabio Uxa

Reviewer's report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?  
   YES

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?  
   YES

3. Are the data sound?  
   YES

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?  
   YES

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?  
   YES

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?  
   YES

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?  
   YES

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?  
   YES

9. Is the writing acceptable?  
   # YES

   - Major Compulsory Revisions
   # None

   - Minor Essential Revisions
1. Discussion- Paragraph 7nd: In the last sentence is written that “... maternal contact (i.e. Kangaroo-mother-care) seems to reduce neonatal mortality ...”; more that the ‘contact’ is the mother involvement in the process of care, as is in the KMC, that reduce mortality and severe infections mainly in ‘Low Middle Income Countries’ (as in the meta-analysis in the bibliography [19]: Conde-Agudelo A, Belizán JM, Diaz-Rossello J: Kangaroo mother care to reduce morbidity and mortality in low birth weight infants. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2011).

- Discretionary Revisions

2. Might it be an alternative title: “What Interventions could reduce infections ...? : the views of ...”

3. Background- Paragraph 4th: [6] In this article the 58.6% of the neonatal deaths occurs in the first 24h. It’s an important contribution to distinguish ‘early’ vs. ‘late’ sepsis. Is it so also in the Central and Central-South Regions of Vietnam?

4. Background- Paragraph 4th: What is the percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel, vs. home-deliveries, in those areas of Vietnam? [In the WHO World Health Statistics, 2009, the national figure for Vietnam was 88%]

5. Background- Paragraph 4th: “…infections ... responsible for 11% of deaths” . Are these neonatal or U5IM deaths?

6. Methods- Paragraph 3th: Could it be described in more detail what the Authors mean by “family contact”.

7. Results- Paragraph 1st and Table1: As described in the contribution [6], is it known the ‘age at death’?

8. Results- Paragraph 1st and Table1: The dead newborn infants in these data were only in-born, or the out-born infants are included?

9. Results- Paragraph 1st: in the last sentence of the paragraph “...about 200,000 neonates were born in this hospital” or in these hospitals?

10. Results- Paragraph 3th: What is the usual duration of hospital stay after a normal birth or a caesarean?

11. Discussion- Paragraph 2nd: My I propose to the Authors “… ‘Prophylaxis and therapy’ (ante partum antibiotics in case of maternal infection, Premature Rupture of Membranes - PROM, screening for maternal Group B Streptococcus-GBS infection) were …” in place of “… ‘Prophylaxis and therapy’ (screening for maternal Group B Streptococcus- GBS infection, and ante partum antibiotics) were …” ?

12. Discussion- Paragraph 3nd: What is the incidence of GBS in the Vietnam population (in North and South)? Is it relevant? The screening cost?

13. Discussion- Paragraph 4nd: There was any discussion during the course about how are now applied in those hospitals the analyzed interventions?
14. Discussion- Paragraph 5nd : About nurses/patients ratio, are the mothers allowed to assist their healthy or sick babies? Are the Units open to the parents?

15. Discussion- Paragraph 7nd : In the last sentence is written that “… maternal contact (i.e. Kangaroo-mother-care) seems to reduce neonatal mortality …”; more that the ‘contact’ is the mother involvement in the process of care, as is in the KMC, that reduce mortality and severe infections mainly in ‘Low Middle Income Countries’ (as in the meta-analysis in the bibliography [19]: Conde-Agudelo A, Belizán JM, Diaz-Rossello J: Kangaroo mother care to reduce morbidity and mortality in low birth weight infants. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2011).

16. Conclusions : May it be appropriate to include in the Background section some data on the breastfeeding rates in Vietnam, if available?

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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 that I have no competing interests'.