Reviewer's report

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

Version: 2 Date: 22 January 2013

Reviewer: Giovanni Vento

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Major Compulsory Revisions
Considering that newborn infections are responsible for approximately one-third of the estimated 4.0 million neonatal deaths that occur globally every year, the study by Trevisanuto et al. addresses an essential and urgent issue to be discussed. Appropriately targeted research is required to guide investment in effective interventions, especially in low resource settings.

1. In comparison to developed countries, where group B streptococcus (GBS) is often the most important pathogen, in developing countries the causal organisms of sepsis, acute respiratory infection, meningitis etc. are frequently gram-negative bacteria such as Klebsiella pneumoniae and Escherichia coli, that likely originate in the maternal genital tract. Do the Authors have some data about the etiology of episodes of infections occurring in the hospitals where participants were working at the time of the survey? Do the Authors have knowledge of the role of perinatal infections in the same hospitals, to eventually focus their attention in the prevention of this type of infection, by using intrapartum and peri-partum therapeutic aids?

2. Considering that the aim of this study was “….how to improve neonatal infection prevention and control”, do the Authors evaluate in their survey the significant role of potential low-cost interventions in significantly reducing the mortality and severe morbidity associated with infection in perinatal care? in these settings of promising high-impact preventative and curative interventions, studies of chlorhexidine in developing countries have focused on three primary uses: a) intrapartum vaginal and neonatal wiping, b) neonatal wiping alone, and c) umbilical cord cleansing. This point should be discussed.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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' below".