Author's response to reviews

Title: Perinatal mortality in pregnancies with omphalocele: data from the Chinese national birth defects monitoring network, 1996-2006

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear editors and reviewers;

Thank you very much for your hard work and kind suggestions. We have considered carefully each question and comment, and have substantially revised our manuscript after reading your insightful comments. We also have responded to all the comments one by one in this letter. If you have any questions and suggestions for our study, we are welcome to receive the letter from you. Thank you very much again.

We hope that the revision of the manuscript is now acceptable for publication in your journal. We are looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

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Reviewer: 1

Comments to the Author

Thank you very much for your hard work and good suggestions.

Reviewer: 2

Comments to the Author

1. On p 5, para on ascertainment of cases, add a sentence explaining why the study did not continue beyond September 2006. Readers will wonder; also consider adding a sentence toward end of conclusion about follow up studies, which might also include more current data. In this paragraph, there is also an extra 's' on the word 'gestation' (second line from bottom of page).

Answer: Thank you very much for your good suggestions. Since September 2006, the number of the member hospitals has almost doubled. Therefore, to ensure the comparability of registered data from the member hospitals, our study period was confined to January 1996 to September 2006. We have added these explanations into the Methods/Statistical analysis in the revision of the manuscript (Page 9, line 1-2). In the following studies, we will include more current data to investigate the perinatal mortality of pregnancies with omphalocele. We have also added these considerations into the end of Conclusion in the revision of the manuscript (Page 14, the last sentence of Conclusion).

2. On p 6, first full para, if you say according to ICB DMS, this implies you will also include a reference.

Answer: Thank you very much for your kind suggestion. We have added to the reference in the revision of the manuscript (Page 6, the second paragraph & Page 18, Reference 22).

3. The tables are much improved. However, there should be spaces between each rate or odds ratio and the confidence interval, as well as after the comma between the upper and lower confidence interval. Example: In text now: 33.9 (21.5, 46.3) Should be: 33.9 (21.5, 46.3) This should be corrected in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

Answer: Thank you very much. As your suggestions, corrections have been done in Table 1, 2 and 3 in the revision of the manuscript. Please see Page 20, 21 and 23.

4. Very minor, on p 4, first word second full para, the word 'multiple' might
imply to some readers that a combination of risk factors are associated with omphalocele. You probably mean to use the word 'several' to indicate that more than one risk factor is associated. For readers unfamiliar with this literature it might also be useful to list some of the more important risk factors identified.

Answer: Thank you very much for your kind suggestions. Corrections have been done in the revised manuscript (Page 4, the first word of the third paragraph).