Reviewer's report

Title: Elevated PDGF-BB Concentrations in Premature Neonates Who Develop Chronic Lung Disease

Version: 1 Date: 17 November 2003

Reviewer: pratibha agarwal

Reviewer's report:

General:
1) The authors need to clearly define exclusion criteria and whether infants of mothers with presence of PROM /Chorioamnionitis or infants with early sepsis were included. These factors may independently affect the levels of PDGF-BB and incidence of CLD and introduce bias during analysis.
2) It would be useful if the authors could comment during their discussion on findings by Currie AE et al (Arch Dis Child Fetal Neonatal Ed2002;86:F193-97)(Ref28) in which they concluded that growth factors other than PDGF-BB were responsible for fibroblast mitogenic activity and that mitogenic activity of BALF was similar in RDS, Control and CLD groups.
3) 36/50 (72%) babies were treated with postnatal steroids!! The authors need to state in their methodology regarding indications for postnatal steroid usage and duration of therapy. Could the decrease in PDGF-BB levels from day 11 onwards be accounted for by anti-inflammatory effects of steroids which were started on approx day 10.
4) Clinical data on duration of mechanical ventilation was one of the data collected but there is no mention of the findings of this data in the results. It is important to know the no of babies still ventilated and sampled at different times during the study period.
5) Have the authors looked into the possibility of the concentration of PDGF-BB being independently related to gestational age in an inverse ratio?
6) Are there any postmortem findings available on the 6 babies which can support the increased fibrosis presumably resulting from the raised PDGF-BB levels.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Minor Compulsory Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No
Declaration of competing interests:

none