Reviewer's report

Title: Retinopathy of prematurity and risk factors: a prospective cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 8 January 2005

Reviewer: David K Coats

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General Comments
This paper evaluated various risk factors to determine if they were associated with development of severe retinopathy of prematurity. A better term would be “advanced ROP” rather than “severe ROP.” The study found that prolonged or a higher cumulative dose of postnatal steroid administration was associated with an increased relative risk for retinopathy of prematurity. The answer to the question regarding postnatal steroids has not yet been fully answered. This paper provides useful new information on the topic. The statistical methods are not described in enough detail to allow me to fully understand what was done. If the authors have not performed a multi-logistic regression analysis then the conclusions of the study are not really valid and this should be clarified. The paper is well written and I have only minor additional comments as noted below.

In the abstract, the term “severe retinopathy of prematurity” should be defined in the abstract, as this is not a standard term.

The sentence including “...lower gestational age, dependence on ventilation, and use of post-natal steroids were intertwined indicating severe disease status” is awkward.

Page 8, paragraph 3
I suggest use of past tense rather than present tense. “....there was an obvious increase”

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

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes

Declaration of competing interests:
I have no competing interests