Reviewer's report

Title: Management of Neonatal Hyperbilirubinemia: Pediatricians' Practices and Educational Needs

Version: 1 Date: 10 October 2005

Reviewer: Claudio Tiribelli

Reviewer's report:

General

The Ms addresses an interesting and re-emerging issue such as the possible toxic effect of neonatal hyperbilirubinemia. The approach used is interesting since involved operators “on the field” and not only academic institutions. The conclusions are also of interests as indicate that the level of knowledge of the recommended guidelines (AAP in this case) is less that optimal pointing to a better education. However the paper suffers specific problems which need to be addressed before proceeding further.

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

The response rate was less that 50% which invalidates the study. Also how the pediatricians were selected is less than clear. The authors indicate to have “randomly” selected 800 out of 1623 pediatric doctors of the NJC of AAP. Of the 800, 430 returned the questionnaire of which 24 were incomplete and 51 (13+17+21) discarded. In spite of the fact that the final number equal to 355 and NOT 365 as reported, how was selection bias was ruled out? This needs to be clarified. Statistical analysis may help.

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

The lack of experience and/or not following the guidelines is associated with over-treatment. This needs to be stressed.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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: Yes