Reviewers report

Title: Recruitment and variability in risk factors and biomarkers from a multi-center study: Is a prospective cohort of diet feasible in India?

Version: 1 Date: 18 February 2011

Reviewer: Mohan Viswanathan

Reviewers report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

• Abbreviation, ‘HIS’ should be expanded at first mention.

• The results section in Page 11, provides two sets of response rates. It is not clear which is correct. The authors may kindly clarify as it is confusing to the reader. “Eighty-eight percent of eligible participants completed all questionnaires, 67% provided all biological samples (New Delhi and Trivandrum only), and 70% provided anthropometric measurements. Of the individuals who agreed to participate in the study, 98% provided all questionnaire information, 78% gave anthropometric measurements and 77% provided biological samples.”

• Title : The question in the title whether a prospective cohort of diet is feasible in India appears to undermine and question Indian scientists abilities and this should be removed and the title modified suitably.

Minor Essential Revisions

• The authors have stated that, “it is important to note that the recruitment of individuals who agreed to provide biological samples, which could be an important strategy for future studies”. This strategy could increase the recruitment rate, however, may lead to recruitment bias.

• Abstract : Is it correct to refer to fish, dairy and pulses as ‘staples?. Traditionally the term ‘staple’ is reserved for the food items which would provide the bulk of the calories. In India, this would be rice or wheat or some other cereals.

• The authors state that epidemiological studies of diet in India are sparse. However, survey of literature shows that there are large epidemiological studies of diet in India especially in south India, which have reported on the dietary carbohydrates, glycemic load, refined grain consumption, fruits, vegetables, salt intake and overall dietary profile of urban adult population in South India in the context of chronic disease epidemiology. It is suggested that authors may quote some of these epidemiological research on diet carried out in India.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable
**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests