Reviewer’s report

Title: Timeliness of Childhood Vaccine Uptake among children attending a Tertiary Health Service Facility-based immunisation clinic in Ghana

Version: 5 Date: 29 November 2013

Reviewer: AYEBO A. SADOH

Reviewer’s report:

MAJOR REVISIONS
The authors have addressed most of the comments but in so doing have raised some more issues

Background
1) 10th line in first paragraph what is the meaning of “Ghana's Schedule differs from countries”?
2) 3rd line in 2nd paragraph- Sadoh and Eregie(ref 10) did not state that Nigeria gives a birth dose because of higher risk of transmission but stated that Nigeria uses the EPI schedule that recommends a birth dose of hepatitis B vaccine. Ghana like Nigeria and many other countries use the EPI schedule.
3) 7th line in 2nd paragraph- ” and this may present challenges to meeting the factors informing the immunization schedule” This statement is not clear. What are these factors?
4) 11th line in 2nd paragraph- ” as these may have implications for public health programmes' What are these implications? Timely receipt of vaccines is important because it ensures that the recipient is protected from target diseases as early as possible. Lack of timeliness results in children being susceptible for longer periods and when there is a pool of such susceptible children an epidemic can be propagated. The foregoing which is of major importance for timeliness should be reflected in your manuscript.
5) Paragraph 2 is too long. Divide in to two paragraphs
6) line 23 in 2nd paragraph " low proportion of hospital deliveries may present a challenge to the immunisation programme" what is this challenge?

METHODS
1) How was the sample size calculated?
2) it is not clear how the sampling was done. If the sample frame was the list of children who attended the facility in the preceeding 12 months then some of the selected children should not be available as they would have completed their immunization at 9 months and stopped attending the facility except of course the facility continues to offer well child services beyond 9 months of age.

DISCUSSION
1) The first paragraph should be deleted as this is a repetition of the aims of the
study. The comparison of the results to national trends is in the second paragraph.

2) lines 6/7 in 2nd paragraph-"although children delivered in health facilities other than KATH received some vaccines later" this information is not in the result section or in the tables. Results should not appear for the first time in the discussion section.

3) The last statement of paragraph 2 is only valid for birth doses.

4) "It would have been expected that almost all the babies should have received BCG on time since they were born in a health facility. This seeming missed immunization opportunities may be due to..." This statement should precede the reasons proffered for BCG missed opportunities.

5) 4th paragraph" majority of the babies delivered by caesarean section received the first vaccine on time" This information is not in the result section.

CONCLUSION

1) 3rd line 1st paragraph- "a relatively higher proportion of babies delivered outside KATH received vaccines later" this information is not in the results.

MINOR

METHODS

1) Written informed consent was obtained from all respondents after explanation of the purpose of the study including the voluntary nature of participation of potential respondents. The forgoing should replace lines 4-7 of the second paragraph.

2) "selected children were identified on the date of ? ANC? i believe this should be date of immunization.

RESULTS

1) The titles of the tables should be at the top of the table not below.

2) Table 1 - the total number of deliveries is 259 not 258.

3) The mode of delivery was not known for one child as written in the result section but table 1 has mode of delivery for all the babies.

CONCLUSION

1) Delete "a" before later in the 4th line.

DISCRETIONARY

DISCUSSION

1) Any speculations as to why timely uptake is better in Ghana than in Nigeria?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field.

Quality of written English: Acceptable.

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests