Reviewer's report

Title: Identification of Families for Genetic Studies of Birth Defects Using The National Health Interview Survey

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Reviewer: Jaqueline Hecht

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript describes as the objective "to identify informative families for genetic studies of birth defects using a novel population-based dataset" (introduction page 3). After reading the manuscript, the objective is, to determine the efficacy of using population-based data set to identify informative families for genetic studies of birth defects. While this is an interesting approach, these results demonstrate that this is a poor way to ascertain birth defects especially familial birth defects. The population covered is too small and thus, the negative results found by the author. This report might better be sent as a short letter to the editor. The discussion is sparse and could include a discussion of sample size considerations that are needed to perform genetic studies of complex diseases. In fact, that information when starting this project should have enabled the investigators to realize this approach would not work. Perhaps they need to give this manuscript a different emphasis.

What next?: Reject because too small an advance to publish in any journal

Declaration of competing interests:

None.