March 20, 2006

Dear BMC Editors,

We have made revisions to our original submission in order for our publication to follow the guidelines of the MOOSE group. Much of the criteria outlined in the MOOSE study reflect a quantitative study design. However, our study on Albinism throughout Africa was meant to serve as an initial narrative summary of the currently available information on this study population through a systemic search/review. The results of the review were supplemented through a pilot qualitative survey designed by the World Health Organization (WHO) to its African Member States in order to obtain an initial baseline of what is known about the epidemiology and problems facing people with Albinism.

Therefore, we have made changes according to the MOOSE criteria which were pertinent to our study. The reporting of background was already included in our paper. In terms of reporting the search strategy, we included the missing criteria such as a time period for the search study, and efforts which were made to contact authors of publications. Study designs were specified in table 1. The search strategy was also described separately (see below). As far as the criteria on reporting the methods are concerned, a rationale for the selection and use of publications was added in the methods section. Most of the MOOSE criteria for quantitative summaries, however, were not applicable since we did not aim at pooled estimates of any kind. The reporting and discussion of studies as well as conclusions follow the general spirit of MOOSE.

We have also uploaded a file, as requested, outlining our search strategy.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Esther S. Hong
Hajo Zeeb
Michael Repacholi