Author's response to reviews

Title: Regional perinatal mortality differences in the Netherlands; care is the question?

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Response to the reviewers BMC Public Health Manuscript 4040245642241018

To the editor

Dear editor,

We were pleased to hear that our manuscript ‘Regional perinatal mortality differences in the Netherlands; care is the question?’ is accepted for publication in BMC Public Health.

We would like to thank the reviewers for their valuable comments on our work. Below we provide a description of the minor revisions that were made in relation to the comments from the referee.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of all authors
Miranda Tromp
Amsterdam
March 13\textsuperscript{th}, 2009

\textbf{Reviewer’s report}

\textbf{Reviewer}: Shingairai Feresu

\textbf{Reviewer’s report}:

\textbf{Minor Essential Revisions}:

1. Title: Should you say care is the question or is it poor access due to rurality? think about this again and see

Poor access to care could be a possible explanation of the increased risk in the northern region, but the differences remained after adjustment for urbanization degree. Therefore we prefer the title as is was – care is the question.

2. The explanation you give on severe anomalies should be included in the paper on page 8 where you talk about them.

On page 8 we give an explanation of severe anomalies as was given in the response to the reviewers.

3. On page 5 where you describe study population, you talk about excluding births less than 500 gm, if you did not know GA, what if they were above 500 grams, how did you estimate GA
GA was estimated based on ultrasound (most cases) or last menstrual period, which is now added to the text. If GA was unknown and birth weight was above 500 gram the birth is included in the study population conform the WHO definition.

4. On page 10 results about Table 5, otherwise it’s not clear why you picked that region as reference. You may need to write that you are comparing perinatal risk to Western region upfront, and state the reason, why
The western region was set as reference area as the mortality risk for the western region was equal to the overall mortality rate. We have added this text to the result section as it was only mentioned below table 3.

5. Finally, the cities, are not appearing on Figure 1 yet.
The 4 main cities: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Den Haag and Utrecht are depicted on Figure 1 (in the previous submission an old figure was still visible).