Reviewer’s report

Title: Regional perinatal mortality differences in in the Netherlands; most prominent from 32+0 weeks gestational age onwards.

Version: 2 Date: 23 January 2009

Reviewer: Bengt Källén

Reviewer’s report:

I think the authors have made a good job of the revision. Here are a number of minor details which I asked about which have not been answered in the manuscript.

1. The actual model in the logistic modelling. The fact that maternal age has a U-shaped relationship must be taken into consideration when maternal age is entered as an explanatory variable in a model and it is not clear from the text how and if this has been done. The same problem with parity and then there should be an interaction term between age and parity, I think. The authors have hopefully thought about this but it is not clear how it was solved.

2. The question on congenital anomalies has to some extent been clarified. It would have been nice to see exactly what conditions that were removed and how frequent these were which would give an indication on how complete ascertainment has been. I don’t think this is very important, however, and it can probably be left as it is.

3. The only thing which I think the authors must re-consider is the title of the paper. I suggested that the title should somehow include a message that one not only describes differences but also try to identify causes.

What the authors have done now is to add another message, that the major differences were among infants born after week 31 which I do not think is that important that it has to be put in the title.