Reviewer's report

Title: Dental caries among children visiting a mobile dental clinic in South Central Kentucky: a pooled cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 4 March 2013

Reviewer: Wael Sabbah

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Major Compulsory Revisions:

The authors need to describe the criteria for coverage by the mobile dental unit. It is not clear whether the service is provided to all schools, or provided in selected schools based specific markers related to students SES or availability of insurance. Secondly, within the selected schools, is the service preceded by dental screening to select eligible students? If it was, what are the clinical criteria for inclusion of students in the programs. The authors need to elaborate on the criteria for selecting schools and students, if any. In other states, similar preventive programs usually target high risk students at school with high percentage of students with low SES. If this was the case in Kentucky, the results definitely are not representative of the population, they rather reflect disease pattern among high risk, poorer sectors of the population, which should be discussed in the paper. It would also explain some of the findings especially in relation to the lack of differences between different ethnic groups in dental caries.

Minor Essential Revisions

In the stated conclusion in the abstract and in other parts of text, the authors stated that dental hygiene education is important to prevent dental problems, this statement is not supported by the findings of this study, and should not be included in the abstract. If the authors want to keep the statement in the text it should be clear that the statement is not supported by findings from the study.

The title of the manuscript should reflect this is a low SES population.

The analysis did not include any indicator of SES other than urban/rural and dental insurance, this should be reported as a limitation

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 declare that I have no competing interests