Reviewer’s report

Title: An Australian Aboriginal birth cohort: a unique resource for a life course study of an Indigenous population

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Reviewer: Prof Robyn McDermott

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Advice on publication: Accept without revision

This paper describes in good detail the follow-up methodology for a small birth cohort of Aboriginal children in remote and rural parts of northern Australia. The focus of the paper is a description of the follow-up methods and logistics, and little data is presented on the findings. The paper establishes sufficiently that follow-up was good, with 86% of the original cohort being examined, and that there was probably little bias from loss of subjects. The conclusion, that the follow-up strategies were effective "in a supportive environment" is a little ambiguous.

It would be helpful for the authors to clarify which aspects of the environment were supportive for follow-up (after all, they present some of the difficulties e.g. frequent change of address and names of children). Do they mean that the health staff were supportive, or that the team was able to negotiate well with community-level support to enable more children to be found?

The paper is simple and well written. I look forward to the results of the cohort study.

Competing interests:

None declared.