Reviewer's report

Title: The prevalence of stillbirths: a systematic review

Version: 2 Date: 18 November 2005

Reviewer: Malinee Laopaiboon

Reviewer's report:

General

The paper is very interesting and provides benefit evidence for maternal and child health service.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Some Comments

1. It would be clear for readers if the authors explain what the population and facility-based studies are and whether they provided similarly data of studied characteristics. It is because the data sets of population based of 63 is nearly 4 times of facility-based (17).

2. If the table 1 presents the description of data sets for population-based and facility-based, it would help the readers to understand whether they should be combined and analysed by the meta-regression.

3. For the same reason as of comment 2, the pooled stillbirth rates as presented in table 2 should be provided for subgroups of facility-based data sets.

4. The results analysed in the combined data sets as showed in table 3 were dominated by the data of population based. So it may be not convincing for the presentation of both results of the population-based and combined data sets.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'