Reviewer's report

Title: Effects of propofol versus thiopental on Apgar scores in newborns and peri-operative outcomes of women undergoing emergency caesarean section: a randomized clinical trial

Version: 2
Date: 3 December 2014
Reviewer: Warwick Ngan Kee

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions.
1. The exact objective of this study is still unclear to me. Please clarify by stating a clear study hypothesis. Did you expect a difference between study drugs or was this in fact a non-inferiority study?

2. The power analysis needs clarification. The outcome tested is a categorical variable. Please state what expected baseline outcome, the source of the data on which this was based, and exact details of the effect size. I do not understand an alpha value of 1.96.

3. More emphasis should be placed on the low-resource environment. It seems that many of the anaesthetics were not administered by trained anaesthesiologists. Can the authors comment on the external validity/generalisability of the results?

4. Many of the final conclusions are speculative and not supported by the findings. How do the results inform the selection of induction agent according to the physiologic state of the mother and the indication for caesarean section? Where in this study was decision to delivery interval and its effect on neonatal survival considered?

Other revisions:
1. Lines 58-64. The description of the two induction agents is unbalanced. For thiopental you describe a "longer induction time" - longer than what? Certainly not propofol. You state that a disadvantage of propofol is that it crosses the placenta - is this any different to thiopental?

2. I still do not see how it is possible to measure an Apgar score at 0 min.

3. You describe faster improvement in Apgar scores for propofol. Statistical analysis should be performed to support all such statements.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests