Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence of early-onset neonatal infection among newborns of mothers with bacterial infection or colonization: a systematic review and meta-analysis

Version: 1 Date: 18 July 2014

Reviewer: Kathryn Harris

Reviewer's report:

General comments:

This is a systematic review of the prevalence of early onset neonatal infection in babies born to mothers with bacterial infection. The paper clearly presents the methodology and results and provides adequate and balanced discussion and in general sound conclusions.

Discretionary revisions:

1. My understanding is that by 'lab diagnosis' of infection the authors refer only to culture based methods and have excluded studies using molecular diagnostic methods (e.g. PCR). This should be made more clear in the methodology.

2. PCR-based diagnosis of maternal and neonatal infection is becoming more widely used, in particular PCR for Group B Streptococcus. Even though this review does not include studies that have used PCR for laboratory diagnosis of infection the authors should include something in the discussion about PCR-based diagnostics. The point being that a proportion infections that are defined only by clinical signs would be laboratory confirmed if molecular methods such as PCR were used.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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