Reviewer's report

Title: Validating the British Columbia Perinatal Data Registry: a chart re-abstraction study

Version: 2 Date: 1 March 2015

Reviewer: Lee Taylor

Reviewer's report:

This is a very well written manuscript that describes the process and results of a validation of the BCPDR. While the results of the study are of interest primarily to British Columbia and possibly other Canadian provinces, the results are also of interest to those managing Perinatal Data Registries generally. The use of the stratified clustered sampling design is of general interest to those responsible for the operation of registries primarily based on events occurring in hospitals.

Major compulsory Revisions
1. Lines 7 to 10 of the Methods note that “Each selected maternal chart was linked to the corresponding newborn chart(s), and vice versa” and that these records were re-abstracted to include all babies from multi-fetal pregnancies. It would be helpful if the authors could explain why this was done.

2. The Methods note that data entry for the BCPDR is performed by multiple abstractors at numerous sites across the province. In terms of improving the quality of information provided to the BCPDR, has consideration been given to the use of computerised maternity information systems, whereby the clinical staff enter information directly into a database (from which a paper record could be printed off) rather than the other way around? Computerised maternity information systems have the advantage of ensuring that complete information is collected and range and logical checks are carried out at source. The Discussion would benefit from a comment on this.

3. The Discussion should include a section on comparisons to any other similar published validation studies.

Minor Essential Revisions
4. The term “newborn exam” would better read “newborn examination” throughout the manuscript

Discretionary Revisions
Nil.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
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