Reviewer's report

Title: Gastro-oesophageal reflux: A mixed methods study of infants admitted to hospital in the first 12 months following birth in NSW (2000-2011)

Version: 0 Date: 22 Mar 2017

Reviewer: Madalynn Neu

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review, "Gastro-esophageal reflux: a mixed methods study of infants admitted to hospital in the first 12 months following birth in NSW." The paper is well written and although factors such as prematurity are well known in connection with GERD, this paper does a nice job of tying together a group of factors that are associated with the disease. The paper would be of interest to clinicians who work with Infants who have GERD and their families.

Abstract.

The abstract is clear and presents the study well. NSW is not written out until page 7. Many readers may not know that it means New South Wales. Please write it out in the abstract.

Literature Review

The literature review is comprehensive and sets up a good rationale for the study.

Methods

Pg 7, line 46. Change "was" to "and."

Pg 7, line 49. Please define the comparison groups better. I believe you mean infants with GOR and GORD versus infants with neither diagnosis, but it could be stated more clearly.

Phase 1 and Phase 2. Would mothers and infants be in both groups or were they completely separate? Please make this clear.
Phase 3. It would be helpful to have some examples of questions. It seems odd to mention on pg 11, that GOR/GORD was raised by the participants in 6 of the groups and mentioned a total of 22 times, when the focus of the groups must have been GOR/GORD. How were the discussions started? Was GOR/GORD not the focus?

Pg 9, line 15, remove the word "during"

Pg 9, line 33. Insert a comma in the number 869,188.

Pg 9, line 41. I am a little confused why "born in Australia" is mentioned as a finding. The study was done in Australia, so would it not be expected that most mothers were born there - or is there some special significance to this? It is mentioned several times as a result (including in the abstract), but never discussed so seems to be a rather insignificant finding. Please indicate why it was included and its meaning to the group of factors associated with GERD.

Pg 15. Disturbance of the microbiome. I think the infant microbiome is worth speculation, even though it was not a variable in the study. However, antibiotic use really is a stretch without more explanation. More explanation is needed in this section.

Pg 17, lines 22-24. This sentence would be better stated as a suggestion for future research instead of a "should" statement. Findings of this study as written did not include examining any interventions. The entire paragraph could be focused on future research.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?  
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?  
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?  
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes
Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?

If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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