Reviewer's report

Title: National data quality standards for population-based birth defects surveillance programs in the United States

Version: 1
Date: 20 May 2015

Reviewer: Olufemi A Oloyede

Reviewer's report:

General Comments:
The questions posed by the authors are well defined
Methods considered appropriate
Data are relevant
Figures represent findings from study
There is need for modification of title
Writing is acceptable after relevant corrections
Manuscript clearly express limitations and strong points
There are areas to be amended in the discussion

Reviewer's report
- Minor Essential Revisions

Title
Author should amend the title to show that the publication is an preliminary report on the subject Methodology
Criteria for inclusion for analysis should be described under methodology

Discussion
Page 9, Line 2: ‘to focus on certain attributes in order’ Confirm if the sentence is intended to imply the meaning in the statement below- ‘that makes it inevitable to focus on a particular attribute against others’, given resource constraints.
Paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5, all on cancer registry is obviously too long and has many areas that do not relate to the discussion on birth defect registry. Authors should review and reduce the paragraphs and bring out portions that contribute to the study findings.

Page 12, Line 7: ‘to transition to standards to increase’. The meaning is not clear. Please address
Page 13, Paragraph 2 is not contributing to the discussion significantly. Please delete or amend to bring out the import of its inclusion in the discussion

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

**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'