Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Musculoskeletal sequel in patients with obstetric fistula - a case-control study

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 8 August 2014

**Reviewer:** Gill Brook

**Reviewer’s report:**

**Minor essential revisions**

1. Within the Results, Socio-demographic characteristics you note a statistically significant difference between the fistula and control groups in relation to parity, so I feel this should be discussed.

2. Title (and elsewhere in text). I think it would be more accurate to use the term sequelae rather than sequel as there are several impairments/changes reported.

3. Pain is mentioned under methods in the abstract and throughout the submission. How was this assessed/measured? Were the women only questioned about leg pain specifically?

4. Throughout, there is mention of activities of daily living (ADL) sometimes referred to in the text as daily life activities. Could the terminology be standardised?

5. How were the women questioned about ADL? Were they asked about particular, relevant ADLs e.g. lifting?

6. Under Methods, Joint range of movement, there is no mention of ankle inversion and eversion but this is reported in the results table.

7. How were the women questioned about their walking? It would be interesting to know the line of questioning. Were distances involved?

8. The results under Musculoskeletal findings are confusing when considered alongside Table 2. The table indicates that 20 women had walking difficulties after delivery, and 19 at the present time. In the text, it says 4 women reported spontaneous recovery, and 2 had recently developed difficulty, which would make a total of 18. I think this needs to be amended or explained differently if I am misunderstanding the figures.

**Discretionary revisions**

9. Under Methods, Outcomes, there is brief mention of a preparatory period using the tests on 12 women. Could this be expanded on a bit? Did this lead to any changes in the study protocol?

10. Although the number of women with foot drop was low, might there be some discussion about the fact that they were all right sided?

11. Could there be some discussion about why there might be diminished reflexes within the control group?
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

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