Reviewer's report

Title: Diagnostic utility of zinc protoporphyrin to detect iron deficiency in Kenyan pregnant women

Version: 1 Date: 8 August 2014

Reviewer: Kimberly O. O'Brien

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript assessed the utility of ZPP as a screening marker for Fe deficiency among a group of pregnant women at high risk for infection, inflammation and anemia.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Many areas of the manuscript overly emphasize pediatric data in support of these findings / issue (line 348, line236, etc). Data were obtained only from pregnant women and the emphasis and relevance of these findings should focus on this group.

2. The introduction would benefit by including the current WHO recommendations for screening for Fe deficiency and what they conclude about ZPP use as a marker of Fe status in addition to the early reference provided (line 94).

3. Findings on plasmodium pigment from placental histology data should be added to Table 1 / Table 2 as the methods state these data were also used to classify plasmodium infection.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Line 232: please define Fe deficiency more specifically as ferritin depletion.

Discretionary Revisions

None requested.

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests