Reviewer’s report

Title: Antimalarial drugs for preventing malaria during pregnancy and the risk of low birth weight (LBW): A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized and quasi-randomized trials.

Version: 1 Date: 18 May 2015

Reviewer: Andy Stergachis

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions:
1. Define quasi-randomized. Do the authors use this term synonymous with quasi-experimental?
2. Note that there is a lack of head-to-head, i.e., drug vs. drug comparisons.
3. Very few trials contribute to the analyses. Please note. E.g., n-1 in Figure 1.
4. Some results are first presented in Discussion, e.g., bottom of page 11.
5. There is no mention of safety of antimalarials. Note as limitation.
6. Justify why the authors did not assess small for gestational age or prematurity.
7. Label the plots.
8. Zang formula for transformation of OR to RR - justify its use as this is controversial. We recommendation its careful use, it would be better for the authors to use the numbers from the reviewed papers and compute the relative risk from there.
9. Figures: not log OR. Should be RR.
10. Justify why they excluded studies of women who are HIV+.

Discretionary Revisions:
1. Present the section on risk of bias as a Table not in narrative of manuscript.
2. Discuss the potential for misclassification of the outcome of LBW. This can arise based on when the infant was weighed. There are adjustments available but unclear if authors employed these in their original research reports. It is critical they explain how weight at birth was collected and/or imputed.
3. Supplemental Table 1: eliminate some of the columns.
4. Note in Discussion that additional medicines for the prevention of malaria in pregnancy are the subject of trials underway through the Malaria in Pregnancy Consortium.

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests:

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Andy Stergachis is an investigator with the Malaria in Pregnancy Consortium and serves on the Access and Product Management Committee for Medicines for Malaria Venture.