PEER REVIEW HISTORY

ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	**Effect of vitamin A supplementation to women of reproductive age on cause specific early and late infant mortality in rural Ghana; ObaapaVitA double blind cluster randomised placebo controlled trial**
AUTHORS	Karen Edmond, Lisa Hurt, Justin Fenty, Seeba Amenga-Etego, Charles Zandoh, Chris Hurt, Samuel Danso, Charlotte Tawiah, Zelee Hill, Guus ten Asbroek, Seth Owusu-Agyei, Oona Campbell and Betty Kirkwood

This paper was submitted to the BMJ but declined for publication following peer review. The authors addressed the reviewer's comments and submitted the revised paper to BMJ Open. The paper was subsequently reviewed by a BMJ Open reviewer with access to the BMJ reviews.

VERSION 1 - REVIEW

REVIEWER	Prof. H.P.S. Sachdev Senior Consultant Pediatrics and Clinical Epidemiology, Sitaram Bhartia Institute of Science and Research, B-16 Qutab Institutional Area, New delhi 110016, India.

Comments:
For the authors

This manuscript presents important information on infant deaths from a well conducted Vitamin A supplementation trial in pregnancy in Africa. Although a very small proportion of the results were encapsulated in the earlier main publication in the Lancet and included in systematic reviews, the detailed results in this manuscript are relevant as: (i) causes of deaths are reported from a large sample in Africa to evaluate the impact on cause specific mortality; (ii) these provide evidence regarding the differential mortality effects in relation to gender and the season, which is important in relation to the ongoing controversy on this subject particularly in the media; and (iii) would be relevant to the ongoing WHO supported trials on neonatal Vitamin A supplementation.

I have only a few relatively minor comments:

The authors appear to be focusing disproportionately higher on the safety aspect in the box "We also failed to demonstrate any harm from vitamin A supplementation to women of reproductive age in infant males or females in our study population". In reality, there is no evidence of either benefit or harm and this should be stated accordingly only.

The number of Tables may need reduction.

The manuscript was also reviewed by another reviewer at the BMJ but they did not give permission for their comments to be published.

VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

- We agree with the reviewer and we have changed the text in the last paragraph of the box to read "We also failed to demonstrate any benefit or harm from vitamin A supplementation to women of reproductive age in infant males or females in our study population. There was also no modification of the effect of vitamin A supplementation and mortality by season."

- We are happy to reduce the number of tables if requested by the editors.

VERSION 2 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Prof. H.P.S. Sachdev Senior Consultant Pediatrics and Clinical Epidemiology, Sitaram Bhartia Institute of Science and Research, B-16 Qutab Institutional Area, New delhi 110016, India.
REVIEW RETURNED	27/11/2011

All concerns related to the earlier BMJ submission have been adequately addressed.