Reviewer's report

Title: Predicting complete loss to follow-up after a health-education program: number of absences and face-to-face contact with a researcher

Version: 2 Date: 5 May 2011

Reviewer: Charles Mwansambo

Reviewer's report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
The question posed by authors is well defined i.e. Predicting loss to follow up.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   1 & 2 : Methods appropriate but partly described.
   What has not been covered adequately in the write up is how some patients missed the face to face contact and how the study was explained to them. Was there any consenting process for the study? Was it assumed that once you joined the class, then you had consented? Or did the ethics committee waiver the consent because it would have influenced the results?

3. Are the data sound? Yes

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? Yes

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
   Bias of the data set towards women not adequately addressed. There were significantly more women than men enrolled in the study.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished? Yes

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? To a large extent , yes.

9. Is the writing acceptable? Yes.

- Discretionary Revisions

1. Paragraph 1 of Methods
   Joining vs recruited
   …. to learn self management skills . One who joins voluntarily is bound to comply better than somebody who is recruited.
2. Returning questionnaire by post. Not stated whether there was a self addressed envelop and was post paid. Affordability and mobility would be an issue here.

3. The study was approved by an ethics committee. Did participants consent to the study or was a waiver of consent granted. Not stated

4. Results paragraph 2. Those who were completely lost to follow up………were less likely to have met one of the researchers ( suggest include “more than once”). How about during the consenting process or when they were handing out the forms during the group sessions? Need to explain further.

5. Results paragraph 2
   “ also associated with sex”
   - Was the study powered to investigate this association considering that the sample had a female bias.

4. Sample Characteristics
   More women than men recruited. Any explanation?

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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