Reviewer's report

Title: To use or not to use a condom: A prospective cohort study comparing contraceptive practices among HIV-infected and HIV-negative youth in Uganda

Version: 1 Date: 20 September 2010

Reviewer: Busisiwe Nkala

Reviewer's report:

Discretionary Revisions
1. Contraceptive uptake defined as “adoption” – does this mean initiating i.e. for the first time? Consider using a term that is less ambivalent

Minor Revisions
2. Clarify if the polygamous relationships applied to both male and female
3. P12, paragraph 2, line 5 there is missing text “in Eastern Uganda (it was) reported…..”
4. P12, paragraph 2, line 10 spelling – change “initave” to“initiate”

Major Revisions
5. It will help with the focus of the paper if the authors can define the following terms as it pertains to this paper:
   5.1 Modern contraceptive (page 6) “The main outcomes of the study were modern contraceptive use……………..
   5.2 Family planning (page 7)
   5.3 Contraceptive uptake
   5.4 Protection (p5)

The above terms have been used interchangeably in the document and as such tend to confuse e.g. “condom and contraceptive” page 13 and “condom as contraceptive”

6. Revise the first sentence under discussion.

Questions for clarity
7. There was a question on condoms efficacy for HIV prevention, was there a question on efficacy for pregnancy?
8. The two groups being studied were recruited from different setting, with the possibility that they were counselled in a way that addressed the adolescents presenting problem (e.g. TASO offered counselling for dealing with the fact that adolescents are infected), how much influence did the recruitment centres and type of service received prior to being enrolled in the study had on their knowledge and behaviour. Will the authors show how they controlled for this as a confounder?
9. Was the 11% negative and 5% positive who were pregnant at the time of recruitment enrolled into the study?

Other general but important points to consider
10. Suggestion that increased reported birth in the 15 – 19 year old infected adolescent is an indication of unmet need for pregnancy prevention may be an assumption, would this not be a fertility desire?
11. Need more exploration of dual protection and more information on why the youth in the study used condoms – it does seem that the link of condom use to prevention of HIV transmission may have a bearing on why the HIV infected youth may not have shown increased condom use. If possible can authors look at the data for this linkage

**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