Reviewer’s report

Title: Anal and oral human papillomavirus (HPV) infection in HIV infected subjects in Northern Italy: a longitudinal cohort study among men who have sex with men.

Version: 2 Date: 15 February 2011

Reviewer: Filippo Ansaldi

Reviewer’s report:

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted virus; genital Human papillomavirus (HPV) infections are very common and, in particular, anal HPV infection is associated to the development of anal warts and anal cancer which rare in the general population but is common among men who have sex with men (MSM), especially among those HIV positives.

In this study Authors investigated frequency and persistence over 6 months of concurrent oral and anal HPV in HIV infected men who have sex with men. They have recruited 166 patients without history or symptomatic HPV related anogenital diseases to participate in a longitudinal study; clinical evaluation and sample collection were performed and repeated at 6 months. Mouth swabs were tested for HPV and Human Herpes virus 8 (HHV8) DNA detection and anal swabs were tested for HPV DNA detection; a multivariate logistic analysis was done to correlate HPV infection with other covariates (HIV plasma viremia, HBV/ HCV sierology..).

The topic is particularly relevant since there are few articles that analyze concurrently oral and anogenital HPV infections in the same study population; it is clearly laid out, all the key elements are present and it is scientifically and methodologically accurate.

The manuscript is acceptable with minor revision; it contains language errors or bad constructed sentences so authors should check carefully the English.

Below Authors can find some suggestions:

Page 5, line 17 and
page8, line 14 and
page13, line 4 and
page11, line15: There are errors in punctuation

Page 6, line 12 and
page 9, line5: Some sentences should be rewritten
Page 13, line 18 Authors should write “HPV infection rates..” instead of “Rate of HPV infection..”

Paragraph “Methods”: Assay used for detection of HHV8-DNA from saliva
samples should be better described by Authors
Paragraph “Methods” page 8, line 15: Authors report that HPV persistence in low risk infections was 76.6 but on page 12, line 16 they report 75.9 and the value that they report in Table 3 is 76.7.
Paragraph “Discussion” page 11, line 5-6: Authors should clarify this sentence.
Page 27 table 2: there is an asterisk that has no match in the table

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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