Reviewer's report

Title: Canadian oncogenic human papillomavirus cervical infection prevalence: Systematic review and meta-analysis

Version: 1 Date: 18 July 2011

Reviewer: Danielle Backes

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Canadian oncogenic human papillomavirus cervical infection prevalence: systematic review and meta-analysis.

This paper systematically reviews the prevalence of oncogenic cervical HPV infection among Canadian females before HPV vaccination. These data could be important to inform and evaluate HPV prevention programs.

Please number your comments and divide them into

- Major Compulsory Revisions

1) Methods/Results: The authors abstract a lot of data on study characteristics and data on study participants. Were there differences in prevalence based on the other study characteristics abstracted (e.g. study design, HPV detection method, sample size of the study, etc). Was there any evidence of publication bias? Were there differences in HPV prevalence between studies stratified by the characteristics assessed in the methodological quality tool?

2) Methods/Results: Age-specific prevalences were investigated among the routine screening populations. How did the prevalence estimates stratified by age group from the other populations compare to the routinely screened populations?

3) Discussion: Please compare the findings from this study with similar prevalence estimates from (pooled) studies in other regions as well. Is the HPV prevalence in Canada higher, lower, or similar than prevalence estimates from other regions reported in the literature?

- Minor Essential Revisions

1) Methods: Please reference Appendix 1 in the paper, as the search terms are not stated in the text. Why was the Ovid Medline search strategy the only one included in Appendix1? What about the other searches?

2) Please describe how searches were carried out on web sites. Were the results from web sites vs. peer-reviewed publications different? Please also describe more clearly what you mean by “…the author’s personal files were searched, and HPV experts were contacted.”
3) Results: The authors state that 30 reports and 21 companion reports met inclusion criteria. How many contributed data to the systematic review/meta-analysis?

4) In study characteristics, please specify the denominator of the percentages listed. For example, 53% of how many studies (30, 30+21?) did not use a representative sampling strategy?

- Discretionary Revisions

None.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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