Reviewer’s report

Title: Five-year trends in epidemiology and prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission, St. Petersburg, Russia: results from perinatal HIV surveillance

Version: 1 Date: 13 July 2011

Reviewer: Omotayo Bolu

Reviewer’s report:

This is a well thought out and written paper, which provides evidence that targeted and comprehensive HIV prevention measures are effective. In addition, this report demonstrates the vital role of enhanced perinatal surveillance in driving programmatic improvements.

The questions posed by the authors is well defined and the method of using the perinatal surveillance system and HIV reporting is unique, appropriate and well described. The data is based on actual population level data which gives it strenght and the manuscript does adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition. The discussion is adequate but would have benefitted from some mention ot the cost of setting up the system and potential role for scaling up in other parts of Russia. The limitations of the work are clearly stated. The title and abstracts do convey the content of the paper.

* No Major or minor revisions.

Discretionary Revisions:

Authors kindly consider including some discussion about (a) the cost of setting up the systems and is it scaleable. Also are findings generalizable to other parts of the country. (b) Because most of MTCT of HIV now occurs in developing countries, this article will benefit from discussing the potential role for introducing and/ or scaling up such a system in developing countries.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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.