Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence of high-risk HPV types and associated genital diseases in women born in 1988/89 or 1983/84 - results of WOLVES, a population-based epidemiological study in Wolfsburg, Germany

Version: 2 Date: 5 February 2013

Reviewer: Silvia de Sanjose

Reviewer's report:

The study of Ulrich Petry and colleagues provide insight of the HPV prevalence in the region of Wolfsburg in Germany among young women prior to mass vaccination. The study provides baseline data on the HPV high risk types and will be useful for monitoring the infection in the coming years. Overall the data is of interest but I think the manuscript would improve by some modifications on how results are presented. The announcement that there was no hypothesis is somehow confusing as authors are comparing two cohorts and perform multiple statistical tests through the manuscript and conclude about the behavior of HPV 16 infections in relation to other HPV types and the potential impact of the vaccine.

Major:

1.- In the abstract and methods section please provide the year of data collection otherwise is not until the results section that one gets the information.

2.- In the methods section: The follow up section could be omitted as no data are provided. Similarly the information on colposcopy could be omitted. This is quite irrelevant in this paper and probably could be left for a more clinical manuscript. Please add information on how many women were contacted and how many finally participate.

3.- In the methods section and results: please provide information on how HPV is going to be constructed in the analysis and how single and multiple infections are considered.

4.- Table 1 Please provide evaluation of the differences between both cohorts to complement the text that there were no significant differences. Adding column percentages is helpful. STI and genital warts are those lifetime? What does it mean cancer screening?. Globally this table should be more complete and complementary information provided in the methods section.

5.- Table 2 is not very informative and could be deleted.

6.- Table 3 should note how multiple infections have been handled. Maybe the information provided is too detailed and could be summarized by showing the pap results by the two most common HPV types (HPV 16 and HPV 51) and overall.

7.- The data in Figure 3 is not very clear to follow. The authors should provide a
detailed information how to interpret the data and how the levels of large, medium small and equal are being decided.

Minor

8.- In the discussion the Cleopatre study was also done on Spain. Please correct typo “1983/83”

**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'