Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence and Predictors of Cervicitis in Female Sex Workers in Peru: an Observational Study

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Reviewer: Marissa Becker

Reviewer's report:

General:
The authors conducted a cross sectional study evaluating the prevalence and etiologies of cervicitis in female sex workers in Callao-Lima, Peru. This is an important area of research and has significant programmatic implications. The authors found a high prevalence of cervicitis among FSWs who participated in the study, yet a very low proportion of women with cervicitis had an etiology identified. I did have a number of questions and concerns though and would suggest that the manuscript undergo further revisions.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. Abstract, Results: The denominator for CT and GC in the abstract is 87 however in the manuscript the denominator is 99. Please confirm which is the correct sample size.
2. Introduction, paragraph 2: It is not clear to me what the authors mean regarding understanding of the mechanism- does this refer to the pathophysiology of cervicitis or etiology or otherwise?
3. Introduction, paragraph 3: please provide a reference for the statement that FSWs typically receive only intermittent health care.
4. Introduction, paragraph 3: It would be good if the authors can discuss some of the challenges with syndromic management.
5. Methods, Setting, paragraph 1: Can the authors please describe the monthly health assessment which the FSWs undergo? Do they receive presumptive treatment for STIS or are they screened symptomatically? Is treatment free of charge?
6. Methods, Setting, paragraph 1: Who conducts the genital examination during the monthly health check ups and were these same individuals the ones who conducted the examination during the study? Also, please explain how the FSWs that were not registered were identified and recruited.
7. Methods, Study procedures, paragraph 2: Please clarify in what instance the Amsel criteria was used for BV diagnosis and when Nugent scoring was used. Please also explain and justify why two different methods of scoring were used for BV diagnosis.
8. Methods, Study procedures: Where were the diagnostics conducted? Please
clarify where the laboratory was located and whether one lab was responsible for performing all the diagnostics.

9. Results, paragraph 1: Can the authors indicate how many of the 467 women recruited were from registered and how many were from the mobile clinic? Also, do these women differ in terms of their socio-demographic characteristics?

10. Discussion, paragraph 3: The authors correctly state some of the limitations of the study. Specifically, they did not test for HSV or M. genitalium- important causes of cervicitis. Further, they did not collect information on use of spermicides or douching and so it is difficult to comment on potential contribution of non-infectious causes of cervicitis.

11. Discussion, paragraph 3: The authors correctly identify that the method of detection used for trichomoniasis in this study was not very sensitive. This is an important limitation of the study and one that needs further consideration particularly given the high rates of NSC in this study.

12. Discussion, paragraph 5: The authors identify that prior treatment may have impacted the ability to identify a causative pathogen but unfortunately information on prior treatment was not collected. This is an important limitation.

13. Discussion, paragraph 5: The authors state that the monthly health checks for FSW appears to be effective for reducing rates of cervicitis but the justification for this statement is not clear. What were the baseline rates for this population? Where is this information? This sentence seems out of place. Not enough information on the program is provided for the reader.

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

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

**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.