Author's response to reviews

Title: A Prospective Study of Improvements in Endothelial Activation Biomarkers, Including Plasma Angiopoietin-1 and Angiopoietin-2, in Kenyan Women Initiating Antiretroviral Therapy

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Version: 2 Date: 24 October 2012

Author's response to reviews:

October 8, 2012

Dear Editor:

We are pleased to submit the enclosed manuscript entitled “A Prospective Study of Improvements in Endothelial Activation Biomarkers, Including Plasma Angiopoietin-1 and Angiopoietin-2, in Kenyan Women Initiating Antiretroviral Therapy” for consideration of publication in BMC Infectious Diseases. This prospective study evaluates changes in the endothelial activation markers including soluble ICAM-1, VCAM-1, and E-selectin, and the vascular growth factors angiopoietin-1 and angiopoietin-2, in a cohort of 102 Kenyan women with advanced HIV-1 infection initiating antiretroviral therapy (ART).

This study adds to the very limited data on angiopoietins in HIV-1 infection and, to our knowledge, demonstrates their clinical significance in advanced HIV-1 for the first time. We believe the findings from this study provide initial support for the hypothesis that endothelial activation in general, and angiopoietin-2 levels in particular, may be a crucial link between HIV-1-related inflammation and end-organ damage. As such, they will be of substantial interest to a wide range of basic scientists and clinicians.

All authors have contributed to, seen, and approved the final, submitted version of the manuscript. This work has not been published in this or a substantially similar form (in print or electronically, including on a web site), nor accepted for publication elsewhere, nor is it under consideration by another publication. The authors received no writing assistance in the preparation of the manuscript. There is one figure, which we prefer to have published in black and white.
Suggested reviewers for this manuscript are below:

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Dr. W. Conrad Liles is listed as a co-inventor on a patent applied for by the University Health Network (Toronto, ON, Canada) to develop point-of-care tests for endothelial activation biomarkers in infectious diseases. All other authors report no conflict of interest.

Thank you in advance for considering our manuscript for publication.

Sincerely,  
Susan M. Graham, MD MPH PhD  
University of Washington