Reviewer's report

**Title:** Prevalence of Human Papillomavirus in young Italian women with normal cytology. How should we adapt the national vaccination policy?

**Version:** 2 **Date:** 2 May 2013

**Reviewer:** Àngela Domínguez

**Reviewer's report:**

**GENERAL COMMENT**

The article entitled “Prevalence of human Papillomavirus in young Italian women with normal cytology. How should we adapt the national policy?” show the results of an study that was carried out in Italian women, but the manuscript deals a topic with a great interest for public health purposes in all those countries that have implemented universal HPV vaccination for girls. I enclose my comments about possible changes that I think that might to understand the meaning of the main results for the readers.

**Minor Essential Revision**

**Abstract:** The first paragraph of background should better include the current vaccination policy in Italy, because if not, the last sentence “…The aim of evaluating the possibility of extending vaccination” is not clear.

In the results section it would be better to employ always the word women (instead of subjects). The exact value of the prevalence for HPV-DNA positive women for all age groups should be included.

**Conclusion:** See comments about conclusion in the main text.

The last sentence could be deleted of this section and adding an specific section of Funding at the end of the main text, before References.

**Statistical analysis:** The sentence “The prevalence of HPV-infected cases…” Should be changed to “The prevalence of HPV-infected cases and their 95% Confidence Intervals…”

The sentence “The first age-class covered only two years, while the others covered three” should be deleted, because it is obvious. The sentence “Research conducted….16 years “ is not a component of the statistical analysis. The sentence should be deleted and if you consider it is important to include a comment on the Discussion section.

**Discussion:** Because the six more important HPV types are always in decreasing order, you do not need to specify this. Please, delete the expressions “in decreasing order” or “in order of importance”

**Conclusions:**

There are too many conclusions and too many categories (the results confirms, the results highlights, the results emphasizes, the results suggest and the results...
will provide a useful basis to plan …) In order to show clearly the main conclusions of your study, please include only the most important conclusion in two or three sentences. In addition, these conclusion should be grouped into those results that confirm, and those results that only suggest, avoiding the rest of categories because they can distract the reader.

Tables and Figures

Table 2:
Because you are working with a sample of women, 95% CI for the total column should be also included and not only for Negative and Positive Columns.
Figures 3, 4 and 5 should specify that age is in years, as in tables 1 and 2

Discretionary Revision

Background: the abbreviations IARC, WHO and ECDC may be deleted because they do not appear more times in the text.

Results: The sentence “Globally, 132 HPV infections were detected” might be changed to “132 HPV infections were detected in the 103 HPV DNA positive women”

Abbreviations: delete MIUR, ECDC, WHO and IURC because they appear only a time in the text.

Figure 2 “: Legend should be shorter: H, High risk HPVs; L, Low risk HPVs; P, Probable/possible risk HPVs….. Readers can understand well the meaning of H+H+P and the others possibilities with this information.

Figure 4 might be deleted because there are many figures and the main results of this table can be included in the text shown in this table are not discussed.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

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