Reviewer's report

Title: Kaposi's sarcoma associated herpesvirus infection among female sex workers and general women in Shanghai, China: a cross-sectional study

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Reviewer: Denise Whitby

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The revised manuscript by Zhang et al is much improved. My remaining concerns are as follows:

1. In the abstract on page 3 the authors state “Transmission via heterosexual contacts might not be a predominate route for KSHV, at least among Chinese women.” Whilst not an advocate of overestimating the significance of data, it seems to me that this is such an underestimation of the findings presented that it casts doubt on them. The findings presented provide strong evidence that KSHV is not heterosexually transmitted in Chinese women, consistent with the majority of studies in other populations. Why are the authors so surprised?

2. “Predominate” should read predominant

3. On page 4 the authors refer to vertical transmission of KSHV. While there is considerable evidence for mother to child transmission of KSHV, “vertical” usually denotes in utero transmission for which there is no evidence for KSHV. The authors should therefore change “vertical” to “mother to child” throughout the manuscript.

4. On page 5, the authors refer to KSHV as a sexually transmitted infection. KSHV is transmitted via saliva and while it is associated with markers of sexual activity in MSM it cannot be considered an STI. This should be corrected here and throughout the manuscript.

5. On page 17 the authors state “we cannot eliminate the possibility of horizontal transmission via saliva in our population.” Since there is overwhelming evidence that KSHV is transmitted via saliva this is a very odd statement indeed.

6. Also on page 17 the authors conclude “the present study suggests that transmission via heterosexual contacts might not be a predominant route for KSHV, at least among Chinese women.” I suggest this be rephrased more positively as I suggested in point 1.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.