Reviewer's report

Title: Highly active antiretroviral therapy and hospital readmission: Comparison of a matched cohort

Version: 1 Date: 14 June 2006

Reviewer: Reto Nuesch

Reviewer's report:

The study is an investigation on hospital re-admissions of HIV infected patients. Not surprisingly patients on HAART had a lower risk for readmission. And as expected, patients with IVDU had higher risks. These findings confirm results from previous studies. The main strength lies in the study design using a propensity score to balance baseline characteristics between on HAART and not on HAART groups and thus reduce confounders.

Some additional information might make this well written study even more valuable.

Methods are clearly described, appropriate for the retrospective study design and reproducible.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

How many patients were on ART at index admission?

It is surprising, that the number of patients readmitted for AIDS was not different between the two groups. Why is this? Were there any readmissions due to immune reconstitution?

Also the high rate of 42% patients on ART being readmitted is intriguing. Can you provide information on CD4 counts and viral load on HAART vs. not on HAART?

Time between admission and readmission on HAART vs. not on HAART?

Further information on hospitalization characteristics like length of stay, ICU admission

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Were there any differences in AIDS defining disease at index admission and readmission?

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Tables: please explain abbreviations used with a footnote.

Table 1 and 2 could be merged.

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What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests