Reviewer's report

Title: Patterns of sexually transmitted infections in adolescents and youths in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Version: 2 Date: 28 June 2005

Reviewer: Roger Detels

Reviewer's report:

General

The abstract needs to say where the study was done.

Why were laboratory specimens done on only about 50% of participants. What were the differences between those tested and those not tested?

The data in the second paragraph lines 3-5 under HIV in relation to behavioral factors appears to be contradictory.

How did the investigators determine the time that the HIV infection occurred?

What were the presenting symptoms of those with a positive syphilis test, but no ulcers. Discharge is an unusual symptom of syphilis unless there were co-infections with other agents.

The authors need to consider problems with under-reporting of sensitive issues, especially for monogamous women with HIV.

The authors acknowledge that the laboratory tests which they used were not very sensitive. Thus, they should be cautious about reporting overtreatment with the syndromic approach. A proportion of those overtreated according to the low sensitivity laboratory tests may actually have had disease.

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

See above

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

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.