Reviewer's report

Title: Predictors of incident herpes simplex virus type 2 infections in young women at risk for unintended pregnancy in San Francisco

Version: 2 Date: 6 July 2007

Reviewer: Adrian Mindel

Reviewer's report:

General

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

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

1. The first problem I have with the paper relates to the selection of the test used for HSV serology. The majority of epidemiological studies that have been conducted in relation to HSV 2 serology have not used this method choosing instead the Focus ELISA test and/or Western blot. Some justification for the use of this test is required.

2. Background, sentence 2: currently reads: "There currently is no cure for the HSV-2 and clinical manifestations must be controlled with periodic or long-term suppressive medical therapy." I believe "must" is a little strong. Something like "can" or "should" is better.

3. Discussion, page 11, paragraph 2: The authors talk about targeted screening. Some definition of precisely what this means is required.

4. References 14 and 15: These refer to the same data set and re-examine these data in a slightly different way. I am doubtful whether it is pertinent to include both references.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests