Reviewer’s report

Title: Perinatal HIV transmission and the cost-effectiveness of screening at 14 weeks gestation, at the onset of labour and the rapid testing of infants.

Version: 1 Date: 17 September 2008

Reviewer: Maarten Postma

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting paper on repeat screening

minor comments: Postma et al have published previously on repeat screening in AIDS (2002 or so), please discuss that one in relation to your findings on repeat screening

The last section on page 8 should be rewritten. This is vague and it is not clear what exact assumptions were made here (LYG avoided case, earlier diagnosis mother seems all to be included, but exactly how and what were the sources for the exact assumptions?)

Page 9: which probability distributions were used in the probabilistic sensitivity analysis?

Fig 1: it is said in the paper that it is assumed that if screening is denied once, screening is consistently denied also next times, so what is then the relevance of the "OR" models in this listing?

My major concern is with Table 4 on the life expectancies, references 42,82 and 83 are relatively old, they certainly do not justify a life expectancy of an HIV-infected child at 77.74 years, is there a difference between fast and slow progressors? how does 77.74 relates to life expectancy of the mothers at only 12 years?

Level of interest: An article of importance 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:

none