Reviewer’s report

Title: Immune control of HIV-1 infection after therapy interruption: immediate versus deferred antiretroviral therapy

Version: 4 Date: 5 October 2009

Reviewer: Radjin Steingrover

Reviewer’s report:

Regarding question no.6
Applying Fiebig stadia to the patients, the authors have made appropriate changes to the manuscript detailing the stages of PHI by a well described staging method. The results can now be seen in a better perspective. Contrasts with other studies are properly explained/discussed. No unresolved issues, very clear argument/additional data in the covering letter.

Regarding question no. 7
Conclusions were revised and are now restricted to patients to whom this experiment may apply. This is essential in this field where statements about timing of treatment and subsequent interruption need to be related to ill defined definitions like acute or chronic HIV-1 infection. Unjust conclusions about whether or not early HAART during PHI is warranted have been properly revised. The last three phrases of the conclusion depict very well the scope and position of this work.

Conclusion.
The authors have made extensive and important changes. The issues that I raised were sufficiently dealt with.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests