Reviewer's report

Title: Herpes simplex virus type 2 seroprevalence and risk factors among men who have sex with men from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: a cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 19 November 2008

Reviewer: Andreas Sauerbrei

Reviewer's report:

General comments:
The study by Rodrigues et al. was designed to determine the seroprevalence of HSV-2 and to evaluate its association with age, race, educational levels, social status positive serology for syphilis and hepatitis B as well as different demographic and sexual behavioral factors in 403 homosexual men from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. As this study shows, there is a high serorevalence of HSV-2 antibodies in the population tested and the authors found several significant associations with HSV-2 seropositivity such as older age, non-with race, positive serology for syphilis and hepatitis B, stable male partner in the past 6 months and unprotected anal sex with a stable female partner in the past 6 months. Although the most results are not new (see also Ref. No. 18, 23 and 35), this study provides comprehensive information about the serostatus of HSV-2 in homosexual men from Rio de Janeiro and significant factors associated with HSV-2 seropositivity. This information is necessary for implementation of programs to prevent HSV-2 infections and other sexually transmitted diseases. Therefore, this manuscript can be recommended for publication. However, the authors have to consider some amendments before the paper can be accepted for publication.

Specific comments:
Information about the subjects’ consent obtained prior to processing the samples and the subjects’ histories must be provided.

Page 5, paragraph 2, last sentence: The authors should explain which results were included in this study when re-testing of first results was carried out.

Page 5, Statistical analysis: How did the authors define the prevalence ratio?

There are several repetitions that should be omitted (e.g. page 4, paragraph 2, last sentence; page 5, paragraph 1).

All abbreviations should be defined exactly and all percentages should be given precisely.

The English language of the manuscript has to be improved significantly.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being
published

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.