Reviewer’s report

Title: The effect of mode of delivery on HIV-1 disease progression and mortality in a Kenyan cohort

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Reviewer: Hannah Motshedisi Sebitloane

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Comments:
- the main issue with the article is that it was not powered to determine this association, and the sample size is skewed towards those who delivered vaginally.

there is not attempt by the authors to explain why women with NSCS had higher mortality rates despite the fact that all groups had similar traditional markers of HIV progression in all groups postpartum

it is however stated that women with NSCS had lower CD counts and higher mean HIV copies, and tended to deliver by c/section as the years of study went by, possibly suggesting that clinicians could have opted to perform a cesar to prevent MTCT, - it is not noted what the stage of the HIV disease was at the time of deliver - could they already have been AIDS - a suggestion of this is made under "discussion"

- women with NSCS had relatively longer labors, and ended up with NSCS, it would have been interesting to find out the immediate postpartum condition, eg in the 1st 72hours or even 2weeks

- did the stress of labour and NSCS have a detrimental effect of the condition of the women

- how soon after the delivery by NSCS did the patient manifest AIDS related diseases

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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