Reviewer’s report

Title: Screening for cervical cancer in HIV-positive women in northern Italy: a population-based, cross-sectional study

Version: 2 Date: 1 December 2009

Reviewer: Isabelle Heard

Reviewer’s report:

This paper describes self-reported cervical cancer screening practice in HIV-positive women attending HIV-units in a large Italian region. The present study is a cross-sectional study performed in Emilia Romagna region in Italy between July 2006 and June 2007. Due to higher risk of cervical cancer in the setting of HOV, HIV-positive women should strongly benefit from regular access to cervical cancer screening. All women attending their HIV clinic answered a self-administered questionnaire on their previous Pap test and cervical follow-up. Despite a well-defined question, the method used seems poorly appropriate to answer the question. In fact, in the absence of documents to confirm the answers given by the patients, the validity of answers is questioned.

In order to assess the results, the authors may validate the data provided by patients at least in a drawn sample.

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:

I declare that I have no competing interests