Reviewer’s report

Title: Estimation of the epidemiological burden of human papillomavirus-related cancers and non-malignant diseases in men in Europe: a review

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Reviewer: Luiz Carlos C Zeferino

Reviewer’s report:

This review aimed to estimate the epidemiological burden of HPV-related cancers and non-malignant diseases in men in Europe. This is a very important issue considering the actual possibility to prevent HPV infection by vaccination. The question is well defined and referred to the little knowledge about the prevalence of HPV infection and related diseases in men at different anatomical sites. The methods seemed well described and adhered to the standards for literature review study. The data give a good overview of the epidemiological burden of HPV-related cancers and non-malignant diseases in men, but the analysis has several weaknesses and limitations reported in the manuscript.

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISION:

According to this study, the HPV prevalence is 16.0% for cancer of the oral cavity, 28.2% for oropharyngeal cancer and 21.3% for laryngeal cancer and, thus, most of these cancer cases are not related to HPV. For anal and penile cancer, the HPV is detected in over 80% of cases suggesting a strong causal relationship. Nevertheless, according to table 2, the expected number of new anal and penile cancer cases is less than one fifth of the total cancer cases attributable to HPV16/18 in men. Therefore, the last sentence of the Abstract should be removed (These malignant and non-malignant diseases may potentially be prevented by quadrivalent HPV vaccination.). In fact, the current background about the role of HPV in head and neck cancer offers scientific basis for further research to evaluate the efficacy of prophylactic HPV vaccines.

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.