Reviewer's report

Title: Knowledge of breast cancer and its' early detection measures among rural women in Akinyele Local government Area in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Version: 1 Date: 15 August 2006

Reviewer: Lisa Madlensky

Reviewer's report:

An interesting descriptive paper; this appears to be the first study of breast cancer knowledge amongst rural Nigerian women.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1) More detail on the methods for this study are needed:
1a) Please provide more information on the multistage sampling technique that was utilized. Which variables were included in the sampling algorithm?
1b) Who conducted the interviews? What language were the interviews conducted in? Were they conducted in private?
1c) How was the test-retest reliability calculated? The symbol in the manuscript appears as "&", so it is not clear if this is meant to be "kappa" or something else. How many people were included in the test-retest sample, and were their data included in the final sample?
1d) How were the knowledge scores calculated? It appears that most of the questions had a dichotomous response option (true/false or agree/disagree), but the possible range of scores is 26 to 76, suggesting that some questions had scaled responses. How were "don't know" responses handled and scored?

2) Data on response rates are missing. How many women were approached, how many completed the interview, and how many declined? The first paragraph of the discussion suggests that "many older women decline", but no numbers are provided. I would suggest adding a table that compares responders to non-responders, to help readers be informed of any response biases that may exist.

3) While the paper is written well enough in English to be mostly understandable, there are numerous spelling and grammatical errors. The paper would be much improved with editing.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1) I would suggest including "Nigeria" in either the title or the abstract, so that search engines can readily identify this paper as being about Nigerian women.

2) The background section should be updated to include some relevant literature (two examples are below). Currently, a paper from 1992 is cited to describe patterns of breast cancer in Nigeria; I would suggest using the more recent review by Adebamowo and Ajayi (see below).


3. It would be helpful to the reader to have a bit more background on the health care that is typically available to the women in this study. The discussion section indicates that these women do not have mammography available to them. Do most of the women studied have a clinic or health care provider accessible to them?
Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

1) Are there cultural beliefs about breast cancer or breast examination that are prevalent in this study population? This would help to place the results in context.

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.