Reviewer's report

Title: Predictors of persistent cytologic abnormalities after treatment of cervical intraepithelial neoplasia in Soweto, South Africa: a cohort study

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Reviewer: Luiz Carlos C Zeferino

Reviewer's report:

This study investigated clinical predictors of persistent cytological abnormalities in women who had had a large loop excision of the transformation zone (LLETZ), focusing also HIV-infected women.

1. The question posed is not new, but it is well defined.

2. The methods have some weak points: the HIV-infection status was not based on clinical tests; the rate of women attending to follow-up after LLETZ was very low; there were not detailed information about colposcopic examination; the data referred only for the first examination after LLETZ. The statistical analyses were appropriate.

3. The rate of cytologic abnormalities at follow-up was very high including for women considered HIV negative (37/146 = 25.3%); maybe part of these were in fact HIV positive.

4. The conclusions correspond to available general data about this subject.

This study should have the methods adjusted to be published in this journal.

I considered this article of limited general interest, and the importance is in its field considering that the information is from Soweto, South Africa.

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

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' below.