Author's response to reviews

Title: Growth, immune and viral responses in HIV infected African children receiving highly active antiretroviral therapy: a prospective cohort study

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Author's covering letter for initial submission

Title: Growth, immune and viral responses in HIV infected African children receiving highly active antiretroviral therapy: a Growth, immune and viral responses in HIV infected African children receiving highly active antiretroviral therapy: a prospective cohort study

Authors:

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Comments: see over
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Melissa Norton MD
Editor-in-Chief
BMC Pediatrics

Dear Dr. Norton,

Re: “Growth, immune and viral responses in HIV infected African children receiving highly active antiretroviral therapy: a prospective cohort study” manuscript

I am submitting the above manuscript to the BMC Pediatrics Journal for peer review and publication if accepted. This manuscript covers a very important area of growth, virological and immunological treatment response in HIV infected African children receiving highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART). Infected children from resource limited settings have high rates of growth failure and despite access to highly active antiretroviral therapy many of the children may not achieve optimum growth and development.

The findings from our prospective cohort study of 124 children initiating HAART, documents the early responses to HAART including growth, virological and immunological treatment outcomes. Multiple reports from various resource limited settings have documented good treatment outcomes of virological suppression and immunological restoration in children initiating HAART. However, growth response has not been as successful in the older children, and yet most infected African children are much older when they initiate antiretroviral therapy. In order for HIV infected children to not only have increased survival but also improved quality of life we need to better understand how to improve growth treatment outcomes in infected children.

This manuscript highlights the importance of age at HAART initiation as the major factor affecting successful growth treatment response. Our study emphasized the importance of initiating HAART early in HIV infected children so as to achieve maximum benefit including adequate growth response.

I hope to hear from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Dr. Philippa Musoke
Associate Professor