Reviewer's report

Title: Nutritional status and HIV in rural South African children

Version: 5 Date: 19 January 2011

Reviewer: Carl J Lombard

Reviewer's report:

The authors have improved the description of the study population and the sampling details a lot. The authors state that the non-response rate was close to 20% and that it was random. This statement raises a query on the at random non-response.

The authors go to great lengths in Table 1 to compare the the participants who did not want to do a HIV test with those that did. This subgroup is only 5% of the realised sample. Since the Demographic Surveillance system must have some information on the 20% of the non-responders some comparison should be possible.

This is needed to substantiate the statement that the 20% were non-responders at random.

Nothing is stated in the limitations on the possible bias due to the 20% non-responce in the study

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'