Reviewer's report

Title: A comparative outcome of morbidity and mortality in HIV exposed uninfected children compared to HIV infected or HIV unexposed children undergoing surgery: a cohort study

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Reviewer: Mª Ángeles Muñoz-Fernández

Reviewer's report:

The authors state: “HIVe children had worse nutrition than HIVn”. Reasons for poorer nutrition could include parental illness and poverty, infant feeding practices, lack of breast feeding, etc. The cause of HIVe children having a higher rate of complications than HIVn children could be due to social and familiar problems and not to the fact that the children were HIV exposed uninfected. On the other hand, the HIVe children should have a competent immune system similar than HIVn, and the same rate of opportunistic infections. In the discussion must be clearly stated that the results obtained in HIVe could be due to: 1) the low number of HIVe children enrolled in the study; 2) they are younger and could have a non-fully developed immune system or 3) social and familiar problems. However, it is not clear than the reason would be that they are HIVe. In agreement with this point, the risk of complications post surgery in HIVe children undergoing surgery was lower than HIVi children.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'