Reviewer's report

Title: Anaemia in HIV-infected children: Severity, types and effect on response to antiretroviral therapy.

Version: 1 Date: 17 March 2012

Reviewer: Aristotelis Tsiakalos

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions

a) Page 6, Paragraph 1, Line 4: It must be rephrased as: Efavirenz replaced nevirapine…

b) Page 9, Paragraph 1, Baseline assessment.: The % of patients with AIDS should be mentioned.

c) Page 12, Line 1. It should be mentioned that another well studied cause of anemia at least in adults is the presence of antibodies to endogenous erythropoietin Reference “Tsiakalos A, Kordossis T, Ziakas PD, Kontos A, Kyriaki D, Sipsas NV. Circulating antibodies to endogenous erythropoietin and risk for HIV-1-related anemia. Journal of Infection 2010; 60: 238-243.”

Major Compulsory Revisions

a) The authors should mention the proportion of the studied population that was infected with HIV-1 and HIV-2, respectively. Did they notice any significant differences between them?

b) It is important to know the percentage of the population with AIDS and the association with anemia

c) Page 10, Paragraph 6, Viral load response: Did the authors correlate the VL suppression of non anemic vs anemic with the probable better clinical stage of the non-anemic population?

d) Since malnutrition is a well known cause of anemia it is essential to measure parameters such as iron status, B12, pholic acid. This is a major problem of the study, since we do not exactly know the extent that those parameters interact with anemia.

e) Page 13, Paragraph 3. The authors try to correlate virological response to anemia in general. Firstly they do not distinguish the response to the various types of anemia. Secondly they must consider that anemia may not be the reason of the worst virological response among the anemic population but may be just an epiphenomenon.

f) Table 1. How do the authors explain the differences between the orphaned and
not orphaned populations regarding anemia? Did they notice differences in the nutritional status of the examined populations?

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**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