Author's response to reviews

Title: Renal abnormalities among HIV-infected, antiretroviral naive children, Harare, Zimbabwe: a cross-sectional study

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Version: 4 Date: 11 April 2013

Author's response to reviews: see over
9 April 2013

To: The Editor
BMC Paediatrics

Re: Renal abnormalities among HIV-infected, antiretroviral naive children, Harare, Zimbabwe: a cross-sectional study

Thank you for considering our paper. The comments from the reviewers were noted and addressed. The responses are highlighted in red. In addition, there are a few grammatical errors which we corrected and also added a reference which is highlighted at the end of this letter. The reference by Schonwald was also removed because it did not add value and it was on adult patients. All the names of the authors have been added to the reference section.

Reviewer's report
Title: Renal abnormalities among HIV-infected, antiretroviral naive children, Harare, Zimbabwe: a cross-sectional study
Version: 3 Date: 5 March 2013
Reviewer: Russell Pierre

Reviewer's report:
Major Compulsory Revisions
Minor Essential Revisions

1. Figure 1: although the authors provided an explanation, this is not reflected in the Figure; i.e. the Figure is not self-explanatory

The figure has been removed as it was not adding value, the information is already in the text

2. Discussion: This has been adequately addressed; although cited as page 14-15 it is actually seen on page 12

Noted and corrected

3. Minor editorial/grammatical errors

Page 12...........addressed
Page 14...........addressed
Page 14-15.......addressed
Page 15 paragraph 2.......addressed
Conclusion .......2nd sentence adequately restructured

4. Table 3: adequately addressed just minor formatting required

Formatting done

5. Urine sampling methods: this has been adequately addressed

Discretionary Revisions
Conclusions: authors have adequately addressed this

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 not competing interests

Reviewer 2
Reviewer's report:

Minor Revision:
1) Methods, study design and study participants part; It is not clear whether the 3000 children followed in the clinic are HIV infected or not, and the type of transmission should be stated (vertically infected?).

It now reads
“The clinic had just over 3 000 HIV-infected children registered, with about 2000 of them being antiretroviral naïve at the commencement of the study. The majority of these children have vertically acquired HIV transmission. Ferrand et al reported a very low (1.3%) herpes simplex virus (HSV) 2 seropositivity in HIV-infected adolescents admitted at the same hospital and another tertiary hospital in Harare. This suggests mother-to-child transmission as their source of infection since HSV-2 infection is a highly prevalent sexually transmitted infection in southern Africans with sexually acquired HIV infection [26].

2) Figure 1 is still unclear, it should be stated what the 4 couple of bar plot are referring to.

The figure has been removed as it was not adding much value, the information is already in the text

Discretionary Revisions:
1) Background, first sentence could be combined with the 2nd sentence if it is referring to the same reference.

The sentences have been combined

2) Background, 2nd paragraph, Authors should report at the end of this paragraph the literature trend about this topic instead of list the most recent study published with a short description. However the references should be kept.

Since the widespread establishment of ART in 1996, the clinical outcome of HIV-infected children in the United States has improved dramatically and HIVAN is being diagnosed at an older age [2]……. Recent studies in Sub-Saharan Africa report on proteinuria as an early marker of HIVAN and some include the prevalence of proteinuria and renal disease in children on HAART [8-11].
**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Additions**

Page 2, paragraph 2

“Recently, Gu et al reported that expression of the signal transducer and activator of transcription (STAT) 3 is necessary for the full manifestation of the HIVAN phenotype in mice [24].”

Thank you once again

Dr V Dondo