Reviewer's report

Title: HIV Prevalence in Severely Malnourished Children Admitted to Nutrition Rehabilitation Units in Malawi: Geographical & Seasonal Variations A cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 4 October 2007

Reviewer: Stephen SM Graham

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an important study as surprisingly few studies have looked at the prevalence of HIV in severely malnourished children in an African region where both diseases are endemic in children - and none in a number of different, relevant settings comparing region, season and urban to rural. Options for paediatric HIV care have improved considerably in the last few years and HIV is a major cause of poor response to nutritional rehabilitation in severely malnourished children.

Methodology is sound. Data are not overinterpreted and limitations are acknowledged.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. It would be useful to add data, if available, on HIV prevalence broken down by type of malnutrition eg oedematous malnutrition versus marasmus, and by age.

2. The three tables could readily be combined into one table.

3. Reference to Kessler et al is listed twice

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
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