Reviewer’s report

Title: Frequent food insecurity among injection drug users: correlates and concerns

Version: 2 Date: 17 September 2012

Reviewer: Debbie Humphries

Reviewer’s report:

The authors have made several changes that strengthen the manuscript, including an improved conclusion.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. p. 5 ‘a bidirectional and complex set of pathways’ – sentence is too complex and needs to be broken down to be more clear.
2. Multiple references are numbered 36; check reference numbers.
3. Discussion (p. 10/11) – paragraph beginning “there is also a strong association” – Sentence beginning “Effects of malnutrition” - sentence is confusing. It is between two other sentences on depression, but introduces many other effects of malnutrition that are then not followed up.
4. Discussion (p. 11) – paragraph beginning “it has been suggested that food insecurity” –
   a. 1st sentence needs references.
   b. 1st sentence “food security interferences” should be “food security interferes”, and “access harm reduction” should be “access to harm reduction”.
   c. Next two sentences need to be linked together more carefully – I think you’re trying to say that since your data was collected from a needle exchange program you can’t assess access to harm reduction programs, but you can assess access to health and social support programs.
   d. Also - “data were collected from attendees of [a] needle exchange program”.
5. Discussion (p. 12) – paragraph beginning “research links markers” –
   a. 1st sentence – ‘food severe food insecurity” – omit the first ‘food’
   b. 2nd sentence – unclear – editing from previous version was not thorough. I think what you mean is “Severe food insecurity is independently correlated with a 2.5 fold elevated proportional odds of engaging in unprotected vaginal or anal sex, and HIV-positive women are 2 times as likely as HIV-positive men to engage in unprotected sex (8).
6. Conclusion – final sentence – more livelihood interventions? Rather than ‘most’.

Discretionary Revisions
7. Table 3, while technically acceptable, would be much improved if it was structured in a way that made it clearer. One approach would be to indent the variables under each outcome, to make it clear that those variables were all that was included in each multivariate analysis.

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

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.