Reviewer's report

Title: Patterns of Condom use and associated factors among HIV positive clients in North Western Ethiopia: A comparative cross sectional study

Version: 4 Date: 21 December 2011

Reviewer: Emilie HENRY

Reviewer's report:

The authors have made tiny efforts to include my previous comments. Treatment is prevention strategy is only quickly mentioned (please on the references section do not refer to the IAS conference itself, I have provided many references. Authors would gain to read it)

From my point of view the authors have interesting results in hands but they would gain to analyze them a bit differently. Focus of the article is still only on condom use and sexual risk reductions in people living with HIV/AIDS. I will be a bit provocative but one very alarming result of their study is the proportion of sexually active respondents. Only 48,9% of people reported to be sexually active. It is really few and we can see that the proportion is not higher in people with ART (than in ART naïve group) which could indicate that the quality of ART education that should include discussion on sexuality with ART is questionable. As authors indicated in their background section, with treatment scale up (and Ethiopia has a free ART national programme), HIV is moving in a chronic disease and “many HIV infected persons are now living longer, healthier and more sexually active lives”. In this context, their data on sexuality on HIV infected persons is surprising. Explanations may be linked to the health status of participants (?) but maybe also in a strong level of auto-stigmatization and fear to infect somebody else. In the article this perspective is never discussed. People living with HIV/AIDS have the right to health defined as a state of global well-being including sexuality among others. Moreover sexual health should also be defined positively and should not deal only with restrictions and fear to transmit infection.

In the discussion section, further elaboration is needed. As an example, the authors can use systematically the following sentence to explain their results: “this difference may be due to study design, study setting, sampling technique”.

Authors who seem to be health professionals should think about evidence for action and practical ideas that their results would suggested. For example again, page 9-10, they indicated that most of the respondents reported partner refusal and desire of having children as the main reason for inconsistent condom use. Following this, the authors conclude: “so efforts should be strengthen to change client’s attitude towards condom use through continuous health education on their follow up period”. This statement doesn’t seem very appropriate according the reasons described before. Maybe a pilot testing of a sexual health intervention focusing on the couple more than on the individual should be more
appropriate.

Page 10 again “ART naïve clients were two times more likely to use condom inconsistently than experienced”. The authors should not only discuss similarities of their results with others studies in neighboring countries but also propose an interpretation. In this example, I could suggest them to discuss the role of ART education and explain how they conducted it in the local context.

these are general comments about the article that should be taken in consideration for acceptance.

**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.