Reviewer's report

Title: Development of an AFASS assessment and screening tool towards prevention of Mother-To-Child HIV transmission in Sub-Saharan Africa- A Delphi Survey

Version: 1 Date: 5 January 2012

Reviewer: Paul Petraro

Reviewer's report:

• Major Compulsory Revisions

1. There is mention of bias in the last paragraph before the conclusion. There should be more details of potential biases, especially sampling bias. Since this is an observational study, this should be discussed in more detail. It is important to address how the sample was selected and why there are no concerns of sampling bias. For example, this was conducted via email so those that did not have regular access to email would not be able to participate making it harder for more rural experts to participate and this is important since these are the areas least likely to have 100% access to ARVs. Also, in smaller more rural areas, the experts are less likely to have a full grasp of the English language even in countries where English is one of the National Languages.

2. There is mention of language discussions with some of the survey participants starting with the acceptability section on page 6 under results and discussion. There is no mention or discussion of translations of the tools which in many cases will alter the meaning. Additionally, specific statements and use of certain words in English both translate to mean something totally different as well as in English they can have numerous meanings. There is no discussion how this will impact the tool and what, if anything was done to avoid this or potentially address in further research.

• Minor Essential Revisions

3. There is mention of the new guidance by the WHO on ARV treatment for pregnancy and during infancy to avoid the concerns of mixed feeding. This section should be expanded a bit. This is an important development, but there is more extensive literature then mentioned on the percentages of woman receiving ARVs (triple therapy) as opposed to single dose nevirapine. Also, treatment programs lack of ability to fully service more rural areas where AFASS is extremely important. Should address in more detail that although there are new guidelines, there is a need for AFASS and support this need.

• Discretionary Revisions

4. There has been recent literature on the use of flash-treated breast milk in SSA. This was not mentioned anywhere and should be mentioned in the introduction
and elsewhere, if literature supports its potential uses.

References:


**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.