Reviewer's report

Title: Factors influencing attendance at treatment and prevention clinics by patients with podoconiosis in southern Ethiopia: a qualitative study

Version: 1 Date: 5 September 2012

Reviewer: Fasil Tekola

Reviewer's report:

This study addressed an important question and sheds light on why some podoconiosis patients in Wolaitta, Ethiopia had discontinued or irregular use of services at clinic sites. The rationale and methodology of the study, clarity of the report and the conclusions are valid. I have a few comments- most are minor.

Title:
- The title creates over expectation. The study explored factors that determine non-adherence and did not look at reasons for continued attendance. The title should be revisited to reflect this.

Abstract

Background:
- rephrase “… collecting treatment supplies from clinic sites…” e.g. “…visiting clinic sites to collect treatment supplies …”. What has been assessed is the visit in a broader sense (which involves, as mentioned on p4, training of patients to self-manage lymphoedema and monitoring progress as well as collection of treatment supplies).

- The study addressed determinants of non-adherence not of continued visit. Therefore, please rephrase “to explore factors affecting continued collection of treatment supplies…”. Ditto on p8, first paragraph on Results.

Results:
- use of the term “Sub-optimal continuation” is misleading because the study did not measure level of adherence and it is not clear what an “optimal level of continued use” is. Please rephrase as non-adherence/interruption of continued clinic visit/discontinuation of clinic visit/irregular clinic visit depending on what has precisely been assessed by the study. Ditto on p8 at the end of Materials and Methods.

Discussion (major):
- How does the story on podoconiosis in the present study relate with and differ from determinants of non-adherence for ART among Ethiopians living with HIV, Ethiopian pregnant women on antenatal care follow-ups, family planning services etc? There are plenty of studies around these, and making a synthesis of these and highlighting the common and unique features with the present study would make the discussion stronger.
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:

No