Reviewer’s report

Title: Predictors of Mortality Among HIV Infected Children on Anti-Retroviral Therapy in Mekelle Hospital, Northern Ethiopia, A retrospective Cohort Study

Version: 6 Date: 5 May 2013

Reviewer: Fasil Associate Professor Tessema

Reviewer’s report:

Minor Essential and Discretionary Revisions

Abstract

As the sample is too small for mortality study to identify associated factors, authors should not make strong conclusions and recommendations

Though authors tried to qualify quality as quality of life, still there are no indicators to qualify quality of life in the study subjects.

Mortality of 4.8% deaths doesn’t make sense, if it is a rate or ratio should be specifically stated

Introduction

The authors claimed that they are very confident about the reliability of information – but this is just for defence and I don’t agree with the statement given the tools and measurements they have. The reviews made is only related to the literatures that authors manage to access no more and this might not indicate presence of limited information on the area

Method

The time specified June 1, 2006 and May 31, 2011 should be used rather than Dec 2011 to Feb 2012 that doesn’t make sense in terms the age of the data. Better to remove Dec 2011 to Feb 2012 for this part

It is better to remove “variables that are considered to be important” as additional method of variable selection in the multivariable model, as there is no standard, only the statistical method might be sufficient (p <0.05).

Data cleaning (improving the quality through correction of detected errors and omissions) will not by any means improve data incompleteness, inconsistency and inaccuracy – either you have to delete this or give proper response

Result

For the point in figure 1, about meaning of analysis time the authors said adjusted – what does this mean?

What is the main reason of having some variables in table 1 and not in table 2? As there were large number of missing values in some of the variables – like
occupation, and with the small number of deaths (event of interest – maximum 20), there is a clear question and doubt on the validity of the final analysis. I have a reservation in the analytical part from which all the conclusions and recommendations emanate.

Major Compulsory Revisions

In some of the points raised authors preferred to defend rather than giving justified responses. Knowing the inadequacy of the sample making detailed analysis and strong conclusions might not appropriate though limitations are indicated.

Therefore, this report might be used as a brief communication rather than original article due to the limited number of deaths and many missing values for some of the variables.

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I don't have any competing interest what so ever in relation to this paper