Reviewer’s report

Title: Community stigma endorsement and voluntary counseling and testing behavior and attitudes among female heads of households in Zambezia Province, Mozambique

Version: 2 Date: 2 July 2013

Reviewer: Valerie Earnshaw

Reviewer’s report:

This revised manuscript represents a nice improvement from the original. The authors were generally responsive to reviewer suggestions, including those to clarify stigma theory and focus more on stigma. I believe that this manuscript will make a nice contribution to the literature. Well done!

My one suggested “major revision” again concerns the coding of the stigma measures. I remain confused about what the authors are reporting in Tables 2 and 3. Based on the authors’ response it seems that the p-value corresponds to the continuous variables but the odds ratio reported corresponds to the dichotomized cut-points in Tables 2 and 3. Is this correct? If so, my impression is that this is unorthodox – that the p-value should correspond to statistic reported in the table. Therefore, it seems that the authors should report the continuous variable + corresponding p-value OR the dichotomous variable + corresponding p-value in the tables. Given that there’s no known meaningful differences based on these cut-offs, I would think that the continuous variables would be more appropriate. The authors could explain in the text any points of potential confusion. OR, if I’ve misinterpreted the authors’ response and the p-value corresponds to the dichotomous cut-points, then I recommend that authors: (1) describe how they arrived at the cut-points in the statistical methods section, (2) note the results of the continuous variables in the text of the results section (i.e., run the models with the continuous variables and simply note the adjusted statistic and p-value in the text – perhaps the regression coefficient (B + SE) if that is most appropriate), and (3) discuss the implications of the use of cut-points in the discussion (e.g., the importance in differences between 75 and 50 pts on NLD as opposed to smaller changes on the scale).

In my original review, I recommended that the authors avoid making references to analyses that are not presented (Minor Revision #1). Although the authors said that this was “done as per reviewer’s advice”, there remains a reference to an analysis that is not presented on page 16. Again, I recommend that the authors remove this or present relevant statistics in the text.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests