Reviewer's report

Title: Disclosing HIV to partners: results from a mixed-methods study in four African countries

Version: 1 Date: 13 March 2013

Reviewer: Reynold Washington

Reviewer's report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined? Yes
2. Are the methods appropriate and well described? Yes
3. Are the data sound? Yes
4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? Yes
5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data? Yes
6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? Yes
7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished? Not relevant
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? Yes

- Discretionary Revisions

It would be preferable to title the study as "Disclosing one's HIV status to partners...." rather than "Disclosing HIV to partners...."

The objective refers to the role of support groups in non-disclosure, whereas the results only describe how support groups helped with disclosure.

All conclusions from this vast study focus on only few recommendations in relation to support groups. The authors need to redefine their conclusions to explore what else would support disclosure. For eg., the widespread availability of treatment, the support from spouse and immediate family members.

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

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'