Reviewer's report

Title: Consistent condom use with regular, paying and casual male partners and associated factors among men who have sex with men in Tamil Nadu, India: Findings from an assessment of a large-scale HIV prevention program

Version: 1 Date: 25 March 2013

Reviewer: Carmen Logie

Reviewer's report:

Overall this is an important and well written article.

Major revisions:

- background; you need to discuss the social and structural contexts in which MSM in India live. For example, recent decriminalization (or when data was collected, was it still criminalized) and other issues (stigma, shame) that shape the lived experiences of MSM in India. Does social exclusion contribute to transactional sex among MSM? What factors may present barriers to MSM having committed relationships (e.g. lack of social acceptance). Also, the other variables you measure (e.g. alcohol use) has been associated with stigma among MSM in other contexts.

- conclusion: once again the social and structural contexts in which drug use, poverty and other ‘risk’ factors that impact sexual risk among MSM are not addressed. Perhaps promoting social acceptance is one way to both understand and address the roots of financial hardship. Policy implications are also not discussed; you need to situate the study in the current context where homosexuality is not criminalized but there is no legal protection for MSM in discrimination in employment etc. Also were there differences between MSM and transgender. What are your recommendations for future research?

Minor essential revisions:

- your definition of consistent condom use lumped together most/sometimes/never as inconsistent condom use. This should be listed as a limitation: people who mostly use condoms are combined with those who never use.

- This is a limitation and may have some controversy around your decision: "Even though hijras belong to a distinct socio-cultural group and can actually be regarded as male-to-female transgender people,[35] they are included under the ‘MSM’ umbrella in this study in line with the practice of NACO at that time [2].": need to discuss this as a limitation and what is currently recommended (not considering TG as MSM)

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:
I declare that I have no competing interests