Author's response to reviews

Title: Associations between alcohol use disorders and adherence to antiretroviral treatment and quality of life amongst people living with HIV/AIDS

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Reviewer's report:

I would disagree with authors’ response regarding the finding about interaction between drug and alcohol use. This is a major finding and at least within the scope of the current paper, an interpretation should be provided. Readers do not expect an essay about this, but paragraph about how this finding is interpreted in Vietnamese contexts and possible mechanisms are clearly required. If not, for what reason analysis stratified according drug using status was conducted?

Response:

First of all, we greatly appreciate constructive comments and advice by the reviewer. We have thoroughly considered them and would like to answer this question as bellows:

1. The stratification by history of drug use was purposive. We conducted this secondary analysis of the survey data to provide a baseline assessment that helps quantify the impact of our later intervention on alcohol use during ART. In the intervention, we only focus on drug users taking ART.

2. This stratification is necessary in the transitions of HIV epidemics in Vietnam. Historically the epidemic emerged in drug using populations; however, unsafe sex is becoming a major route of HIV transmissions. Drug users always have multiple health problems, making it critical that interventions should be specific to each patient group.

3. The explanation of interaction between drug and alcohol use was not possible given the data collected in this survey, including its nature as self-reported and recalled by patients. We have just completed the 2013 HIV services users survey of 2,500 respondents with more biomarkers and longitudinal data. We will address those hypothesis suggested by the reviewers in our future analyses.

Thank you very much.
Best regards,
Bach Tran.