Reviewer's report

Title: Strategies to Prevent HIV Transmission Among Heterosexual African American Men.

Version: 2  Date: 6 August 2004

Reviewer: Amy Wohl

Reviewer's report:

General
This is a well-written paper in an area sorely in need of more research, ie qualitative research on risk factors for HIV for heterosexual African American men. However although the researchers underscored the high percentage of self-identified heterosexual men who have sex with men and the prevalence of homophobia in the African American community in their introduction, the authors did not appear to address these topics fully in their focus groups, leaving a large gap in their analysis. Therefore much of what is presented is not new or original but reiterates much of what has already been published.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. Did the authors ask any questions of the focus group participants regarding their views and experiences on heterosexually-identified men who have sex with other men? If so, the manuscript would be greatly strengthened by inclusion of these data.

2. Did the authors ask any questions or was there discussion in the focus groups regarding homophobia in the African American community and related experiences for focus group participants? Again, this type of data is not widely available in qualitative research and the manuscript would be strengthened with its inclusion.

3. The lack of money as a reason for low condom use is mentioned at least three times throughout manuscript and is redundant.

4. The authors mention that most of the participants were homeless or living in substandard conditions. It is possible that there was selection bias in this sample in which lower income men are more likely to participate in order to receive the $25 reimbursement. It is probably a good idea to address this limitation in generalizability of these data in the discussion section. I would emphasize more in abstract that this is a low-income sample. Suggestion would be to add “low income” before “housing project” in abstract.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. p. 11, last paragraph, word “go” is missing after “insurance” second sentence

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)


What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the
major compulsory revisions

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

none