Reviewer's report

Title: Demographic, risk behaviour and personal network variables associated with prevalent hepatitis C, hepatitis B, and HIV infection in injection drug users in Winnipeg, Canada.

Version: 2 Date: 12 July 2006

Reviewer: Devon Brewer

Reviewer's report:

General

The authors have revised the manuscript nicely. My remaining comments are just for the authors to consider at their discretion.

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

None.

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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)

None.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

For symmetry, it probably makes good sense to include in the limitations section a note that receiving injections from others also was not assessed.

The correlations between HIV, HBV, and HCV infection are informative (and surprisingly low/absent). By "correlation" in my original comments, I meant "association", and it would be helpful to display the three 2 x 2 tables and report the associated ORs, as the OR is the authors' primary measure of association in this article (correlations and other measures could be computed by readers themselves from the tables if they were interested). If the authors retain the correlation coefficients, the number of places to the right of the decimal point should be consistent with other results reported in the paper.

Although I think it would still be preferable to use the interval nature of the data on the number of IDUs in the network variables (truncation doesn't eliminate the meaningfulness of the continuum), I wasn't suggesting dichotomization as an alternative. I was recommending a common categorization across measures e.g., 0, 1, 2-5, or some other categorization that maximizes the number of non-null categories. As the codings are now, it is difficult to compare directly results for different network variables.

What next?: Accept after discretionary 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:

I declare that I have no competing interests.