Reviewer's report

Title: Determinants of sexual activity and its relation to cervical cancer risk among South African women

Version: 1 Date: 30 April 2007

Reviewer: Ron Gray

Reviewer's report:

General
This paper addresses two important questions, namely, what are the patterns and determinants of sexual activity in adult non-white South African women and how are these related to the development of cervical cancer.

The authors use a case control design in which 524 cases are compared with 1541 controls.

The paper is difficult to follow – for example there are no legends on the tables and explanations of their content within the text seems poor.

Odds ratios have been used to approximate relative risks for outcomes which are common. This seems problematic to me and I would suggest a statistical review of the paper is undertaken.

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

A table comparing demographic and other important characteristics in cases and controls should be presented.

Legends are missing on the tables.

The crude and adjusted relative risk estimates should be presented.

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

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: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests