Reviewer's report

Title: Implications of the HIV testing protocol for refusal bias in seroprevalence surveys

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Reviewer: Patty J Kissinger

Reviewer's report:

The paper is improved and the purpose better stated. However, there are a few things that are distracting:

1. The authors state that population-based studies are underestimated because of testing techniques, but this study is not population-based, it is hospital-based. They should really only talk about hospital-based studies.

2. On page 4, they present a great deal of references for the association between mobility and HIV. This is not relevant as the paper is not dealing with HIV, but rather acceptance of HIV testing. Did they mean that migration effects estimates of HIV testing rates? This point needs clarification.

3. Even though this is an international setting, the authors could incorporate into their discussion the new CDC guidelines for testing in hospital facilities. Since others may follow suit. The use of the classifications of testing seem to change in the methods. Isn't this study really about opt-out vs. mandatory counseling. If so, stating it as such would make the findings and conclusion clearer.

4. On page 12, the sentence "these variables are of little substantive interest in the application and are simply chosen to maximize the predictive power of the regression equation" need further clarification. Like me, many of the readers may be unfamiliar with the Heckman model.

5. On page 14, there should be more discussion of why there was so much variability of acceptance by counselor. Was it just personality or were there some structural issues?

6. Table 1, still seems irrelevant to me. The authors have not justified keeping it in.

7. All tables need to include the N in the title.

8. Is it really valid to look at counselors 3, 5, 6 since the numbers were so few?

9. On table 4 they present Odds ratios for one and Relative risks for another. This needs clarification. It seems to me that this study is really a cross-sectional, since rapid tests were performed, and not really prospective. Participants were enrolled prospectively. I guess it is arguable, but the statistics should reflect the study design.
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests