Reviewer's report

Title: Knowledge and Behaviour of Nurse/Midwives in the Prevention of Vertical Transmission of HIV in Owerri, Imo state, Nigeria. A cross-sectional study.

Version: 4 Date: 1 July 2007

Reviewer: William Holzemer

Reviewer's report:

General
Overall, the author(s) have been very responsive to comments made on the initial review. However, there are several things that still must be addressed before the manuscript is ready for publication. Again, the overall topic is extremely important and does add knowledge to our understanding of the delivery of appropriate nurse/midwifery care.

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

1. Clarify the meaning of nurse/midwives as used in this study. Are all of the participants both nurses and midwives? Initially I thought this was the case but Table 1 suggests only 84% are RNMs. Please clarify.

2. p. 6 Reliability. It does not make sense to conduct a Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for a test-retest evaluation. Cronbach's alpha is used for a one-time administration of an instrument, exploring internal consistency at one point in time. Perhaps the author should report a Pearson correlation between the overall scores at time one and time two in a repeated measures model.

3. p. 7 Respondent's knowledge - note that the manuscript states that a "majority (36.8%) could not correctly identify... and then a "majority 45.8%)..." These figures do not represent majority, particularly the 36.8% figure. This paragraph needs to be revised.

4. p. 7 Knowledge of vertical transmission - last sentence. "Majority of the respondents (51%) has moderate level of knowledge...." The author(s) use this term, "moderate" in a strange way. Please add at the end of the sentence, "as measured by this knowledge test." to emphasize that 50% correct is sample specific and refers only to this instrument and says nothing about being "moderate."

5. p. 9 last sentence Chambers - reference has a typo and should be [19]

6. p. 10. Conclusion. The study revealed a moderate level of knowledge ..." either say something like. "Participants answered approximately 50% of the items correctly on the knowledge test...." or add again the phrase "as measured by this
test."

7. Table 4a and 4b. I can live with categorizing your responses on behavior with the levels of low, moderate, and high but I really do not understand why the author(s) did not simply correlate age with behavior score and years of experience with behavior score. Why code a continuous variable into 3 levels?

8. Table 3, page 14. I was surprised to see the response to question, "how often do you obtain consent before testing.." and seeing only 56.1% report Yes. I felt the author(s) might want to point this up in the conclusion as this might be one of the most interesting findings. In PMTCT provider-initiated testing is much more common and here we may be seeing some of the consequences of this practice, i.e. testing women without their permission.

9. Table 3, page 14. Item: "Are pregnant women usually counseled with their husbands" Seems strange to this reviewer to score this a 3. What control does the nurse/midwife have over this patient behavior? It may be ideal, but it is not the reality yet in this analysis it appears that women are being penalized as if their behavior is not as good, yet it is their reality. ?

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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)
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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 of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests