Reviewer's report

Title: More than just a cut: A qualitative study of penile practices and their relationship to masculinity, sexuality and contagion and their implications for HIV prevention in Papua New Guinea

Version: 2 Date: 28 April 2012

Reviewer: Nittaya Phanuphak

Reviewer's report:

Kelly and colleagues have nicely detailed the complex nature of diverse penile practices in PNG. These information are of importance to plan how PNG could effectively incorporated medical male circumcision into country’s HIV prevention program. Overall, this is an interesting article in its field. However, the authors may consider to revise their manuscript according to the following comments in order to strengthen their findings and conclusions.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. Background, paragraph 3, please correct HIV prevalence number for Port Moresby (currently stated 16.9.8%).
2. Background, paragraph 7, please put BSS abbreviation after Behavioural Surveillance Survey when it first appeared.
3. Results, paragraph 1, please describe “penile shooting” as it first appeared in this paragraph without prior text stating that it is probably the other name of penile bloodletting practice.

Discretionary Revisions
1. Categories of penile practices should also be described by study sites in the first paragraph of the Results and shown as part of Table 1. This would help readers to follow details on each type of penile practices in the paragraphs below more easily. Also, it will help support the text in the second paragraph of the Discussion.
2. Conclusions, paragraph 2, the authors may want to suggest how the country should advocate for medical male circumcision in a way that it is seen by their people to suit the diverse culture, meanings, and reasons they currently have for the other penile practices. Focus should be made on those for contemporary penile cutting commonly performed nowadays.
3. The authors may consider to add the biological explanation of foreskin removal in medical male circumcision for HIV prevention when discussing the longitudinal cut commonly performed in PNG.
4. The authors may want to point out more clearly in the Conclusions paragraph (in the Abstract) that the country could build on the diverse culture, meanings, and reasons of penile practices which are already commonly performed among
PNG men to successfully implement medical male circumcision for HIV prevention.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.