Reviewer’s report

Title: HIV/AIDS awareness and risk behavior among students in Semey, Kazakhstan: a cross sectional study

Version: 3 Date: 17 August 2008

Reviewer: Ademola Ajuwon

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Title of paper: HIV/AIDS awareness and risk behavior among students in Kazakhstan: a cross-sectional study

Reviewer: Ademola Ajuwon

Main points of the manuscript
The authors have addressed the concerns raised in my earlier review. This revision has substantially improved the quality of the paper and its suitability for acceptance for publication. However, I have a few more suggestions for further improvement.

Major compulsory revisions
None

Minor essential revisions
1. There is a mix-up in the title of the paper. Whereas the title of the manuscript is ‘HIV/AIDS awareness and risk behavior among students in Semey, Kazakhstan; a case control study’ that in the authors response is ‘HIV/AIDS awareness and risk behavior among students in Semey, Kazakhstan; a cross sectional survey’. The latter is correct so the correction should be made on the manuscript.

2. The authors used the phrase “sex workers’ and ‘sex sellers’ interchangeably in the manuscript; it is better to choose one of these and use it consistently throughout.

3. The conclusion that intravenous drug use is a risk of spread of HIV in Kazakhstan is not supported by research evidence because only one student admitted to use of drugs. This should be revised.

4. Although four high schools in Semey were selected for the survey but the reader does not know the total number high schools are in the city. Pleases clarify.

5. There is need to specify that the questionnaire was self-completed by the 600 students who participated in the survey component of the study.

6. Is it correct that the range of number of sexual partners reported by male students is 0-75? Is this an over-estimation or is it real? In comparisons to other regions of the world this number is on the high side. Perhaps it should be brought
up for discussion.
7. There is need to clarify that Xinjiang is in China (page 17).
8. Tables 1 & 2 are listed as table 1 (see page 25). Please correct this
9. References 1 & 2, 10 & 11 are not correctly formatted in the manuscript. Please correct this.
10. The following typographical errors should be corrected: ‘today, however, the HIV epidemic In Central Asia… page 2 should be ‘Today, however, the HIV epidemic in Central Asia…”; “structured questionnaires’ on page 6 should be “structured questionnaire”; ‘our final question questionnaires …’ should be ‘the last question in the questionnaire…” page 11; “a majority of 72%…” should be ‘the majority (72%) …page 11.

Discretionary Revisions
None

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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’