Reviewer’s report

Title: Determination of Hematological parameters among HIV positive patients taking HAART and HAART naïve in ART clinic of Gondar University Hospital, Gondar, Northwest Ethiopia: Comparative cross-sectional study

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Reviewer: William Kwame Boakye Ansah Owiredu

Reviewer’s report:

REVIEWER’S REPORT ON: DETERMINATION OF HAEMATOLOGICAL PARAMETERS AMONG HIV POSITIVE PATIENTS TAKING HAART AND HAART NAÏVE IN ART CLINIC OF GONDAR UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, GONDAR, NORTH-WEST ETHIOPIA: COMPARATIVE CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY’

Minor Corrections
Title: Could be changed to `Haematological and Immunological changes among HAART-Naïve HIV patients and those on HAART at the Gondar University Hospital, NorthWest Ethiopia’

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2 Tropical and Infectious Disease Expert. This should be substituted with Departmental Affiliation i.e Department of Clinical Microbiology

ABSTRACT
Background: Line 3 should read: …commonest hematological abnormalities resulting from HIV infection. Lines 5-6 does not read well.

Methods: This should include the number of study participants. This section should be re-written for clarity

Results: First sentence should be expunged.

Conclusion: Line 4 should read……investigated for hematological and immunological changes following which appropriate therapeutic interventions could be adopted in their management.

INTRODUCTION
Paragraph 1 line 3 should read ….different types of hematological abnormalities are common

Paragraph 3 lines 1 should read: Thrombocytopenia is the second most frequent complication of human immunodeficiency virus infection ……

Paragraph 3 line 3 should read: Thrombocytopenia correlates with low CD4 cell count …….
Paragraph 4 lines 1-3 should read: Neutropenia is the most common leucopenia occurring in HIV infected individuals. It may occur in 10-30% of HIV patients with advanced disease (Ref).

Paragraph 4 line 7 should read: ……including cytomegalovirus, tuberculosis, histoplasmosis and leishmaniasis may cause leucopenia

Paragraph 5: Mention should be made of the following paper: Ferede G and Wondimeneh Y: Prevalence and related factors of anemia in HAART-naïve HIV positive patients at Gondar University Hospital, Northwest Ethiopia. BMC Hematology 2013 13:8

Paragraph 5 line 10-11 should read: This study, therefore, assessed the hematological parameters ……

METHODS

Paragraph 1 lines 1-2 should read: This cross-sectional study was conducted at the Gondar University Hospital which is a teaching and referral hospital ……

Paragraph 1 lines 4-5 should read: …follow-up care in the ART clinic during the period. The study was conducted from February to May 2012 on adult HIV positive individuals who were managed at the ART clinic during the study period.

Paragraph 2 line 2 should read: ……who were on HAART for a period of 6 months or more.

Paragraph 3 line 1-2 should read: Data was collected using a structured pre-tested questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of socio-demographic characteristics of ….

Paragraph 2 line 5 should read: …..4 ml of venous blood was collected by an experienced……

Paragraph 2 line 7-8 should read: Hematological parameters were determined using the hematology analyzer Cell-Dyn 1800 (abbott Laboratories Diagnostics Division, USA) where as the immunological (CD4+ T cells) were assayed using the BD FACSCOUNT system (Becton Dickenson and Company, California, USA).

Paragraph 2 line 9-13 should read: To ensure good quality data, pre-testing of the assays was done on patients being managed at the Gondar University Hospital before the study. The performance of the hematology nalyzer and the BD FACSCOUNT system were controlled by running quality control material alongside the study participant’s sample. In addition, all flagged specimen were subjected to manual, differential and morphological assays to confirm the results.

Ethical Clearance

The ethical clearance should read as follows:

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Ethics Review Board of the University of Gondar. Permission for the conduct of the study was also obtained from the University Hospital. After informing study participants of the objectives of the study and assuring them of confidentiality of their data, written informed consent was taken from all the participants. To ensure confidentiality, the study
participants were identified by codes and the data was not accessible to unauthorized persons.

Major Corrections:

RESULTS
1. The data should be analysed by a Biostatistician
2. Gender differences in the haematological changes should be explored
3. The correlation of the changes with age should be explored.

Table 1: Note that MPV is statistically lower among patients on HAART compared to those who are HAART-naïve

DISCUSSION
This section may be affected by the additional information which may be obtained if analysis is re-done

CONCLUSION
This section should be re-done. Currently it is just a re-stating of the results. The limitations of the study have not been stated