Reviewer's report

Title: Relationship between recreational drug use and HIV/STIs among Chinese men who have sex with men: mediation through multiple sexual partnerships

Version: 2 Date: 29 August 2014

Reviewer: Eric Chow

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Major Compulsory Revisions

1. This study is conducted in seven large Chinese cities. It is not clear why these seven cities were chosen. Do these cities have the highest HIV prevalence across the country? Or Do they have the highest drug use % across the country? A brief description of the selected cities would be useful.

2. Authors pooled the analyses from six cities. However, previous studies have shown that demographic and HIV/STI epidemic vary geographically across China. Particularly, authors included Kunming, which is a city with very high HIV prevalence and drug use rate, compared to other cities. It is not clear whether the demographic and behaviours are different between these six cites, if these the socio-demographic compositions of the samples are different between cities, and these factors influence the behaviours and epidemic, authors should not pool the data together.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. The range of MSM have ever used drug (0.1-44%) is very large, it will be helpful if there is any mean or median estimate. In addition, the majority of MSM who also use drug are actually male sex workers (money boys) (Chow EPF PLOS ONE 2012: e48025).

2. It will be useful to provide a percentage of drug use among the general population.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests