Reviewer's report

Title: Twelve-month incidence and clearance of oral HPV infection in HIV-negative and HIV-infected men who have sex with men: the H2M cohort study

Version: Date: 8 September 2014

Reviewer: Alberto Borghetti

Reviewer's report:

Discretionary Revisions

The conclusions fit well with the experimental findings and your main goal (comparing the 12-month incidence and clearance of oral hr HPV infection between HIV-infected and HIV negative MSM) has been reached.

Concerning the determinants of incidence and clearance rate, some other investigations could have been made, for instance:

1) have you examined the role of immune function and HIV-RNA in relation to higher or lower rates of HPV incidence/clearance?

2) You could also try to stratify HIV+ patients in relation to HCV or HBV coinfection status (e.g. you could refer to the article "Oral human papillomavirus detection in older adults who have human immunodeficiency virus infection", Fatahzadeh et al, 2011)

3) Some recent evidence found that oral health (ulcers, gum disease, chronic inflammation, number of lost teeth) could be a risk factors for oral high-risk HPV infection irrespective of smoking and oral sex practices (see "Examining the association between oral health and oral HPV infection", Bui et al, 2013 or "Oral human papillomavirus infection and its risk factors among 5410 healthy adults in China, 2009-2011", Dong Hang et al, 2014). Were there any questions about oral hygiene in the risk factor questionnaire? Did the patient undergo a stomatologic assessment?

If such observations have not been taken into consideration, they could be a suggestion for further investigations, in order to better understand which patients groups are mostly at risk of HPV infection and persistence.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests: 
I declare that I have no competing interests