Reviewer’s report

Title: The effects of add-on corticosteroids on renal outcomes in patients with biopsy proven HIV associated Nephropathy: A single centre study from South Africa.

Version: 2 Date: 04 Dec 2018

Reviewer: Frank Post

Reviewer's report:

I thank the authors for the revised and improved manuscript. There are a few remaining points:

Methods

1. First paragraph: Please correct the ISRTN reference number (56112439)

2. Third paragraph: This should more clearly state the definition of the primary endpoint (e.g. the between study-arm change in eGFR from baseline to month 24). As it is currently stated, I am still unclear whether the change in eGFR was based on data at multiple timepoints or a single timepoint.

Results

1. I remain of the view that the primary endpoint analysis should be adjusted for baseline eGFR; if this overfits the model as stated in the authors' reply, perhaps one or more of the factors that are currently included could be dropped, especially if they were non-significant in the univariate model?

2. I am somewhat surprised that the 7 vs. 1 death was not statistically significant and wonder if the authors can calculate and compare the rate of death in each arm?

3. Table 5: The authors may wish to include information on the baseline biopsy by adding a column for each arm, so that %’s at BL and %’s at repeat biopsy are shown side by side?

4. Figure 3: thank you for including these important data. It might be useful to add the median change in eGFR from baseline at each time point for both arms (I get the impression that these were rather similar with changes of about +18 vs +20 at 6 months, +29 vs. +22 at 12 months, and +22 vs. +27 at 24 months)
5. Table S2 and Fig 4: Table S2 indicates that a full dataset was available for 14 subjects in the ART+C arm yet the KM indicates 10 subjects were at risk - please check which one is correct.

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