**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** Depression among HIV positive pregnant women in Zimbabwe: a primary health care based cross-sectional study

**Version: 0 Date: 23 Sep 2018**

**Reviewer:** Daniel Sack

**Reviewer's report:**

Dear Drs. Nyamukho, Mangezi, Marimbe, Verhey, and Chibanda,

Thank you for your submission — "Depression among HIV positive pregnant women in Zimbabwe" — to BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth. With some revisions, I believe that it would make an appropriate addition to this journal. I have structured my recommendations for major and minor revisions below:

**Major Revisions:**

- **Abstract**
  - There are several instances where you make a statement without providing the appropriate context, such as in sentence one (lines 5-7) in the introduction and sentence one and two of the conclusion (lines 40-44). This results in a broad overgeneralization.

- **Introduction**
  - In the second to last paragraph (lines 33-35), your first sentence claims that evidence-based interventions for PLWH affected by depression are known to improve disease outcomes and then only cite one source. If something is known, I would expect there to be more than one source backing this up. You could, for instance include the sources cited in the next sentence (lines 35-37) if they apply. Two of them refer to Zimbabwe and one to Uganda, which does not seem to be representative of all of Sub-Saharan Africa.

  - In your discussion, you return to this point, stating that the health authorities have been too slow to integrate depression care into antenatal and postnatal care due to lack of evidence, which seemingly contradicts your earlier statement.
- Methods
  o Please elaborate on how your sample is random by describing your process for randomization.
  o Please clarify what associations were identified as associations of interest a priori. For example, in the introduction, IPV is not mentioned and by the discussion it is a key take home point. If you added it later, please justify why you added it in the methods.

- Results
  o Table 2 makes it difficult to distinguish what the p-values and OR are referring to. For example, is the absence IPV associated with current depression? It doesn't sound like it from the text, but it looks like it in the table.

- Discussion
  o In your limitations, please note that the EPDS has been validated in the prenatal period: Murray D, Cox JL. Screening for depression during pregnancy with the Edinburgh Depression Scale (EPDS). J Reprod Infant Psychol 1990;8:99-107

Minor Revisions:
- All
  o This paper could benefit from the editing for syntax and grammar. I believe that this would help clarify some of the ambiguous sentences and reduce the instances of overgeneralization.

- Abstract
  o none

- Introduction
- Methods
  - Please move the cutoff you used from the results to the methods and provide an explanation for why you chose your particular cutoff (> 12), given that other studies have used 9-13.
  - Please elaborate on how the pilot period changed your survey questions/data collection

- Results
  - none

- Discussion
  - none
  - Paragraph one, you state "there have been no other studies…", please change this to "we are not aware of any other studies…” in case they exist

Thank you again for your submission,

Daniel Sack
MD/PhD Candidate
Vanderbilt University School of Medicine
Vanderbilt Institute for Global Health

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes
Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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