Reviewer's report

Title: A systematic review of post-migration acquisition of HIV among migrant groups living in Europe and implications for effective interventions

Version: 2
Date: 28 November 2014

Reviewer: Kevin Deane

Reviewer's report:

There are no 'Major Compulsory Revisions'.

The paper highlights the gaps in our knowledge concerning the degree of post-migration acquisition, and some of the methodological challenges and limitations in estimating rates of post-migration infection.

Minor Essential Revisions

A couple of comments are necessary which both directly relate to the prevailing negative stereotype of migrants across the world as a group which engage in higher levels of risky sexual behaviour than non-migrants, and also, especially within Europe at present, a background of increasing anti-immigrant sentiment. These should be addressed by the authors.

1. There seem to be some perhaps overly strong statements made around migrants and high risk sexual behaviour in the discussion section 'implications for prevention programming'. From earlier statements, and a look at some of the papers included in the review, it seemed like the evidence is quite mixed. For some groups (Black MSM) you find evidence reporting higher levels of risky sexual behaviour, but this is contrasted with other studies which find that condom use within African living in Europe is higher than the general population, and that the majority of migrant female sex workers in Spain used condoms consistently with clients. These studies seem to challenge these negative stereotypes of migrants as ‘risk takers’.

2. The authors need to consider implications their review may have for migration policies. Of course, this applies to the individual studies reviewed, but the general findings, which seem to suggest that post-migration infection may in fact be higher than first thought, could be used as an argument to further limit and police immigration, or to further stigmatise pre-existing migrant populations.

3. From looking at the studies included, it is clear that the definition of a ‘migrant’ or ‘migrant population’ varies across the papers, something which is acknowledged by the authors, with ethnic groups and migrants used interchangeably (see tables 3 and 4). The authors could make it clearer what their starting definition of a migrant was for the systematic review and who this related to the inclusion criteria, and whether this changed during the review
process.

Minor issues not for publication
1. In the section ‘implications for policy’, what do you mean by combination prevention for both migrants and non-migrant communities? Is this drug combination prevention, or structural/behavioural/biomedical prevention, and are the authors suggesting that policies should target everyone?
2. P4, line 9-10 – this sentence does not scan well
3. P11 – tables 1 and 2 are inserted after tables 3 and 4 (on page 9)
4. P14, line 6 – should the sentence start with ‘ideal’?
5. Across the whole article, references appear after the fullstop, whereas they should be before it

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

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