Reviewer's report

Title: Chlamydia trachomatis, Neisseria gonorrhoeae and syphilis among men who have sex with men in Brazil

Version: 1  Date: 16 March 2015

Reviewer: Birgit van Benthem

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions

Methods:
It is not clear from the methods section how the MSM were recruited into the cohort study. Please give information on inclusion and exclusion criteria of the original cohort study or refer to a paper that explains it. There were much more HIV-positive men than HIV-negative men included into the study. Can this be explained by the inclusion or exclusion criteria or the way study participants were recruited?

Results:
In general it should be clear from the table titles alone that study participants are MSM participating in a cohort study in Rio, Brasil. Titles are too general now.

Table 1. Row percentages for HIV-negatives and positives are derived by using total number of study participants, but percentages should be calculated by using the number of HIV positives and number of HIV negatives respectively.

Line 145. Numbers are incorrect (n=31 and n=6) since they do not add up to 55. Please provide the number of the group that had 3 or more STD.

Information on HIV status, i.e. time since diagnosis, % on treatment is only mentioned in the text. I would provide this important information also in a table.

Line 160. Total number of HIV positive men with at least one STD mentioned here is 42, whereas in table 1 it is 45.

Only 3 lines in the results section were devoted to the multivariable analyses (Table 3). It would be interesting to know if factor for having an STD are different for HIV positive and HIV negative men (did the authors check for interaction?). Repeating the analyses without HIV status included would be informative as well because than you get more insights into the possible effects of recent behavior. Please change discussions according to these results.

Discussion:
It would be important for the reader to know the HIV situation among MSM in Rio. How many MSM are on treatment, know their HIV status etc. This information would give an idea of how representative the study population is for the MSM
population in Rio. Is this information available?

Line 210. Change % according new % to be calculated for table 1.

Minor essential revisions

Methods:
The original study is a cohort study, where study participants are followed-up normally based on regular visits. For the cross-sectional study only the inclusion visit was used?

Please explain if study participants new their HIV-status before or was this the first time they were tested for HIV. If not, it would be relevant to know how long they know their HIV-status and for those HIV-negative when was the last time they were tested?

In the sexual behaviour questions distinction is made between HIV-positive and HIV-negative partners. For HIV negative partners did you use a time-interval for HIV testing?

The use of alcohol is asked via a question if the study participant was drunk before having sex. It might be that alcohol was used, but the study participant did not consider himself as drunk. When asking alcohol usage in such a way, you get underreporting of alcohol use.

Discussion:
Since anorectal Ct is common it would be interesting to know if samples were tested for LGV and how patients were treated.

Line 205-206. The authors underline the need for STD screening in MSM. Would it be all MSM or especially HIV positive MSM?

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests