**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** The association between HIV and atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease in sub-Saharan Africa: a systematic review

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 30 Sep 2017

**Reviewer:** Cuong Duong

**Reviewer’s report:**

The life expectancy of people living with HIV (PLWH) is increasing thanks to antiretroviral therapy and better quality of HIV care worldwide. Infection with HIV itself is associated with a high risk for heart failure and atherosclerosis.1 Antiretroviral therapy can also cause adverse lipid profiles and increased risk for cardiovascular disease.1 Yet studies on cardiovascular disease among PLWH are limited, especially in low-resourced countries. Our colleagues have introduced a comprehensive systematic review regarding cardiovascular disease and HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with a focus on atherosclerosis. It is clear that the findings have added to the current body of knowledge about this issue not only in SSA, but also worldwide.

The manuscript is well written and nicely presented. I have only some minor questions that would be great if the authors can address as follows:

- Line 111: The search terms included "Africa". How could we find published studies that were conducted in countries in SSA but do not have the word "Africa" in their titles?

- Line 126: The inclusion criteria included "study population without adolescents". Why was this specific group that can develop cardiovascular diseases excluded from our study?

- Line 214: I think "study findings" should be removed or placed before "CVD risk factors" as the current location of "study findings" makes us feel section "CVD risk factors" is not the finding out the presenting study.

- Line 345-348: The authors have discussed about the limitations of the different designs of studies used in the presenting study in terms of the level of evidence including cross-sectional study, cohorts and trials. Yet it would be better if the authors acknowledge the limitations of case-control studies that have also been used in the presenting study as well. Also, we are not so sure whether all included studies have properly adjusted for potential confounders or not (information not provided) and this should also be acknowledged.

Reference:

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

Yes

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

Unable to assess

**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 am able to assess the statistics

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

Acceptable

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