Reviewer’s report

Title: Effect of vaginal self-sampling on cervical cancer screening rates: a community-based study in Newfoundland.

Version: 5 Date: 11 April 2015

Reviewer: Paolo Giorgi Rossi

Reviewer’s report:

Major compulsory
1) In my previous comment #5 I recommended to adopt also a definition of Pap test coverage with at least three year interval. This measure will give a more realistic idea of the health impact than the one year interval.

2) The introduction is still missing the main point: the issue about comparing HPV test and Pap test is not the sensitivity, but the ability to prevent cancer. The two things are related but non directly consequential. This is why the answer given by the pooled analysis of the European trial is not the same of the CCCaST. The European trials show that the incidence of CIN3 in the HPV arm is higher in the first round and lower in the second round compared with Pap, while the total number is similar in the two arms, meaning that there is no overdiagnosis related to increased sensitivity. On the other hand the sensitivity for cancer is very similar between HPV and Pap, but the incidence of cancer in the follow up is lower in the HPV arm, showing that finding earlier the CIN3 prevented some cancers.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests