Reviewer's report

Title: AuTop trial: Screen-and-treat program by Point-of-care of Atopobium vaginae and Gardnerella vaginalis in preventing preterm birth: protocol study for a randomized controlled trial

Version: 1 Date: 24 July 2015

Reviewer: antonio cianci

Reviewer's report:

Major revisions:

The study is interesting and well structured. It opens new horizons regarding the screening for vaginal infection in pregnancy and the related preterm delivery risk. However the aim of the study and the potential cost savings cannot be fully achieved by searching just Atopium vaginae and Gardrenella vaginalis without a complete analysis of the vaginal ecosystem (enterococcus, streptococcus…). In particular it does not consider the amount of lactobacilli in view of the wellness/disease status of the vaginal flora. It could be significant to add lactobacillus colonization status for further studies.

Minor revisions:

Why the authors have chosen the oral use of azitromicin or amoxicillin as the unique appropriate therapy for the treatment of vaginal infection and other topical therapies are not considered.

Authors could have used topical nifuratel which is effective against Atopium vaginae and Gardrenella vaginalis without affecting the lactobacillaris flora.

Which criteria do the authors used to choose the specific antibiotic?

Why do they not used topical therapy with lactobacillaris strains highly lactic acid producers that lead to a significant reduction of vaginal PH determining favorable conditions for endogenous lactobacilli growth?

Could the authors be more exhaustive regards the usual care management in the control group?

To assess the cost-effectiveness of a systematic screen-and-treat program we ask which advantages this study has compared to the use of fresh vaginal swab and traditional culture followed by a treatment with vaginal lactobacilli and nifuratel that has a real effectiveness angainst Atopobium even if it is not identified with traditional molecular technique. This could lead to a reduction of recurrence.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

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