Reviewer's report

Title: Strategies for Improving the Lives of Women Aged 40 and Above Living with HIV/AIDS: An Evidence Map

Version: 0 Date: 25 Jul 2017

Reviewer: Mark Brennan

Reviewer's report:

This paper provides a systematic review of empirical literature that addresses the care of women age 40 and older living with HIV. As noted in the literature review, women with HIV account for nearly ¼ of diagnosed cases and due to effective therapy, the population of women with HIV over age 40 continues to increase. Thus, this type of review helps to address the need for and evidence base to develop programs and policies to support this population as they age.

The methodology of the review is explained clearly and appears to be sound. I largely agree that given the dearth of literature on this topic, it is difficult to prioritize the research that is needed to provide a decent evidence base on women over 40 with HIV. However, I would urge the authors to revisit this and make a stab at setting some specific priorities - including key topic areas - that will increase the value of this systematic review to the field. Some other issues I noticed that should be considered in a revision of this paper are noted below:

1. Page 3, Introduction, first paragraph. These epidemiological data should be updated with the most current information available (I believe CDC is now reporting 2015/2016 data). Additionally, there are other estimates that the HIV population 50 and older reached the 50% benchmark as of 2015, and there are some projections it will hit 70% by 2020. See: High K/Office of AIDS Research (OAR) HIV and Aging Working Group: HIV and Aging: State of Knowledge and Areas of Critical Need for Research: A Report to the NIH Office of AIDS Research by the HIV and Aging Working Group. Journal of AIDS 12 60 (Suppl 1): S1-S18. It would also be good to provide the proportion of those with HIV, including women, over age 40 as this is the focus of the review.

2. Page 3, line 12. The first sentence would be more accurate if phrased, "Age at HIV infection, rather than age at …" as one is not "infected" with AIDS, but AIDS is the result of HIV infection.
3. Page 3, line 16. This would be stronger if the authors articulated the late diagnosis of older adults with regard to concurrent HIV/AIDS diagnoses and compared that by age group.

4. Page 3, line 18-22. This would be stronger if there was mention of the average number of comorbid conditions reported, or some comparison made of the comorbidities in HIV-infected vs uninfected populations.

5. Page 4, line 3-6. Citations are needed regarding HIV and reproductive hormones/menopause.

6. Page 3, lines 13-14. What proportion of women over age 40 with HIV are Black/African American?


8. Page 20, line 3. In the first recommendation, it would be helpful for the authors to unpack what they mean by "overall burden" in the first recommendation.

9. Page 20, lines 16-17 and 20. The correct acronym for the Women's Interagency HIV Study is WIHS, not WISE. The same study is incorrectly named as the Women's Interagency Health Study in line 20.

10. The paper would benefit with a concluding paragraph as ending with the bulleted list seems abrupt.
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