Supplementary Information 4
Quality Appraisal Checklist – Qualitative Studies

Concerns about disclosing a high-risk cervical human papillomavirus (HPV) infection to a sexual partner: a systematic review and thematic synthesis.

| ID Number (on Excel spreadsheet) | Date form completed | Assessed by | Authors | Title | Journal | Year | Volume | Issue | Pages |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|---------|-------|---------|------|--------|-------|-------|

**THEOREtical APPROACH**

| Is a qualitative approach appropriate? | Appropriate | Inappropriate | Not sure | Comments: |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|----------|-----------|
| For example:                           |             |               |          |           |
| • Does the research question seek to understand processes or structures, or illuminate subjective experiences or meanings? |             |               |          |           |
| • Could a quantitative approach better have addressed the research question? |             |               |          |           |

| Is the study clear in what it seeks to do? | Clear | Unclear | Mixed | Comments: |
|---------------------------------------------|-------|--------|-------|-----------|
| For example:                                |       |        |       |           |
| • Is the purpose of the study discussed – aims/objectives/research question/s? |       |        |       |           |
| • Is there adequate/appropriate reference to the literature? |       |        |       |           |
| • Are underpinning values/assumptions/theory discussed? |       |        |       |           |

**STUDY DESIGN**

| How defensible/rigorous is the research design/methodology? | Defensible | Indefensible | Not sure | Comments: |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|----------|-----------|
| For example:                                                |            |              |          |           |
| • Is the design appropriate to the research question?        |            |              |          |           |
| • Is a rationale given for using a qualitative approach?     |            |              |          |           |
| • Are there clear accounts of the rationale/justification for the sampling, data collection and |            |              |          |           |
| Data Collection Techniques Used? | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Is the selection of cases/sampling strategy theoretically justified? | |

**DATA COLLECTION**

| How well was the data collection carried out? |
|---------------------------------------------|
| For example: |
| Are the data collection methods clearly described? |
| Were the appropriate data collected to address the research question? |
| Was the data collection and record keeping systematic? |
| Appropriately | Inappropriately | Not sure/inadequately reported |
| Comments: |

| Is the context clearly described? |
|----------------------------------|
| For example: |
| Are the characteristics of the participants and settings clearly defined? |
| Were observations made in a sufficient variety of circumstances? |
| Was context bias considered? |
| Clear | Unclear | Not sure |
| Comments: |

| Were the methods reliable? |
|----------------------------|
| For example: |
| Was data collected by more than 1 method? |
| Is there justification for triangulation, or for not triangulating? |
| Do the methods investigate what they claim to? |
| Reliable | Unreliable | Not sure |
| Comments: |

**ANALYSIS**

| Is the data analysis sufficiently rigorous? |
|---------------------------------------------|
| For example: |
| Is the procedure explicit – i.e. is it clear how the data was analysed to arrive at the results? |
| How systematic is the analysis, is the procedure reliable/dependable? |
| Is it clear how the themes and concepts were derived from the data? |
| Rigorous | Not rigorous | Not sure/not reported |
| Comments: |

| Is the data ‘rich’? |
|--------------------|
| For example: |
| How well are the contexts of the data described? |
| Rich | Poor | Not sure/not reported |
| Comments: |
| Question                                                                 | Yes/No | Comments |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------|
| Has the diversity of perspective and content been explored?              |        |          |
| How well has the detail and depth been demonstrated?                    |        |          |
| Are responses compared and contrasted across groups/sites?              |        |          |
| **Is the analysis reliable?**                                            |        |          |
| For example:                                                             |        |          |
| Did more than 1 researcher theme and code transcripts/data?             |        |          |
| If so, how were differences resolved?                                    |        |          |
| Did participants feedback on the transcripts/data if possible and relevant? |        |          |
| Were negative/discrepant results addressed or ignored?                  |        |          |
| **Are the findings convincing?**                                        |        |          |
| For example:                                                             |        |          |
| Are the findings clearly presented?                                      |        |          |
| Are the findings internally coherent?                                    |        |          |
| Are extracts from the original data included?                           |        |          |
| Are the data appropriately referenced?                                  |        |          |
| Is the reporting clear and coherent?                                     |        |          |
| **Are the findings relevant to the aims of the study?**                 |        |          |
| **Conclusions**                                                         |        |          |
| For example:                                                             |        |          |
| How clear are the links between data, interpretation and conclusions?  |        |          |
| Are the conclusions plausible and coherent?                             |        |          |
| Have alternative explanations been explored and discounted?             |        |          |
| Does this enhance understanding of the research topic?                  |        |          |
| Are the implications of the research clearly defined?                   |        |          |
| Is there adequate discussion of any limitations encountered?            |        |          |
| **Ethics**                                                              |        |          |

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How clear and coherent is the reporting of ethics?

For example:

- Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?
- Are they adequately discussed e.g. do they address consent and anonymity?
- Have the consequences of the research been considered i.e. raising expectations, changing behaviour?
- Was the study approved by an ethics committee?

| Appropriate | Inappropriate | Not sure/not reported | Comments: |
|-------------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------|

Overall assessment

As far as can be ascertained from the paper, how well was the study conducted? (see guidance notes)

| ++ | + | – | Comments: |
| All or most of the checklist criteria have been fulfilled, where they have not been fulfilled the conclusions are very unlikely to alter. |
| Some of the checklist criteria have been fulfilled, where they have not been fulfilled, or not adequately described, the conclusions are unlikely to alter. |
| Few or no checklist criteria have been fulfilled and the conclusions are likely or very likely to alter. |