Reviewer's report

Title: Trends in antibiotic use among outpatients in New Delhi, India

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Reviewer: Antonio Clavenna

Reviewer's report:

The paper addresses a very important topic, the rational use of antibiotic drugs. This study underlines that qualitative differences exist in the antibiotic prescription profile between public and private sectors.

I would like to suggest a few major compulsory revisions that may improve the paper.

- qualitative differences between public and private sectors should be discussed not only in terms of newer versus older antibiotics, but also in terms of appropriateness. Amoxicillin is the most commonly prescribed antibiotic in the public sector and it is also the first choice antibiotic for the most common infections in the community.

- a comparison with the antibiotics reported in the WHO List of Essential Medicines may be interesting

- Table 2 and Figure 1 reported quite the same data. I think, therefore, that table 2 may be deleted and that figure 1 may report the percentage distribution of DDD/1000 patients instead of % of prescriptions.

- Table 3: I suggest to report also the percentage of total DDD/1000 patients covered by each drug

Minor essential revisions

- There are too many figures. Figure 2-7 are quite difficult to understand. I would like to suggest to delete them

- please, check the spelling of cotrimoxazole throughout the paper

- If you decide to maintain table 2, ATC codes of penicillins, tetracyclines and cotrimoxazole are lacking.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests