Reviewer’s report

Title: Sublingual misoprostol versus standard surgical care for treatment of incomplete abortion in five sub-Saharan African countries

Version: 1 Date: 1 October 2012

Reviewer: BYERA SHWEKERELE

Reviewer’s report:

Minor essential revisions
1. Key words, line one: Use sentence case - Incomplete abortion, Post Abortion Care (PAC). Key word should go to the end of abstract
2. Abstract, line one: 400 g misoprostol – should read 400 g of sublingual misoprostol
3. Background, third paragraph, line one: cite reference
4. Method, 1st paragraph, 17th line - sounds contradictory to randomization
5. Method, 1st paragraph, 19th line: elaborate which of these numbers stands for a randomized trial
6. Method, 2nd paragraph, 3rd sentence: indicate what were guiding principles for provider to discharge patients in all study sites/countries (to ensure discretion within tight study protocol)
7. Results, 1ST paragraph, 2nd line: delete sentence in bracket – sounds contradictory to randomization or elaborate on how they avoided allocation bias on the selection of subjects (patients)
8. Results, 4th paragraph, 5st sentence: correct p-value shown on table 3 is p=0.02 (not p=0.25)
9. Discussion, 1st paragraph, last sentence: ‘learning curve’ with misoprostol – from whom? Citation required.
10. Discussion, 3rd paragraph, 3rd line: delete repeated coma

Discretionary revision
1. Method, 1st paragraph, last three sentences: can safely be deleted without distorting the methodology
2. Method, 2st paragraph, 1st sentence: different surgical procedures and equipment’s were used. More elaboration needed on how standards and consistence were ensured in the study
3. Results, 3rd paragraph, 1st sentence: as well, the outcome might be affected by IRB conditionality on Senegal to use ultrasound?
4. Discussion, 2nd paragraph, 1st two sentences: revisit to get the leader get the link
5. Results, 1st paragraph, 3rd line: 29 women lost for follow-up – some literature (Stewart A, 2002 p.110) do advise lost to follow-up be analyzed as part of the group (known as being analyzed on an 'intention-to-treat' basis)

Major compulsory revision

1. Method, 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence: pills under the tongue and swallow remaining tablet fragments sounds method mix (sub-lingual and oral misoprostol). Elaborate reasons for remnants of tablets were not spit out to make it pure sublingual misoprostol.

2. Limitations of the work (if any) need to be stated

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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'