Reviewer’s report

Title: Causes of perinatal death at a tertiary care hospital in Northern Tanzania 2000-2010: Registry based study

Version: 3 Date: 10 September 2012

Reviewer: Jan Jaap H.M. Erwich

Reviewer’s report:

This paper is about a descriptive study on a ten year cohort of perinatal deaths from a single center in Tanzania. I could give comments on the inclusion bias, the denominators used, the classification system and classification methodology used. But I will not do such a thing. The authors describe some of these limitations themselves. I think this paper should carry the important political statement that the quality of perinatal care must be improved for these women as fast as possible. (Discretionary revisions:) It is this last aspect that should be addressed more in this paper and this message cannot be told often or strong enough. The authors do give recommendations, but more detail on how to obtain these improvements and how to implement them would be important. It is especially worrisome that there is no improvement in outcomes over the 10 years. Whether this is due to changes to a more difficult patient case-mix is not addressed, the causes did not change over the years, so I am worried that the lack of quality improvement is the real cause. Can they put this in relation to the culture or attitude to health improvement in their hospital? In this way other hospitals in similar conditions may learn by avoiding the same mistakes.

Level of interest: An article of importance 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'