Author's response to reviews

Title: Framing Maternal Morbidity: WHO Scoping Exercise

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor-in-Chief,

In response to your comments for our submission entitled, “Framing Maternal Morbidity: WHO Scoping Exercise”, we have included the following comments and edits:

1. Ethics - Research involving human subjects (including human material or human data) that is reported in the manuscript must have been performed with the approval of an appropriate ethics committee. Research carried out on humans must be in compliance with the Helsinki Declaration (http://www.wma.net/en/30publications/10policies/b3/index.html). A statement to this effect must appear in the Methods section of the manuscript, including the name of the body which gave approval, with a reference number where appropriate. If you believe your study is exempt from ethical approval, we would ask that you please provide a statement to this effect in your manuscript, with a brief explanation of why it is exempt. You may wish to consult your ethics committee regarding the wording of this statement.

   • We have included the following statement: This manuscript describes the results of an anonymous Delphi-like survey, requesting professional expertise on technical matters. Questions of personal and sensitive nature were not part of the survey. These are not considered research participant studies, thus considered exempt from review board approvals.

2. Consent - In your manuscript, you state: 'Informed consent was not obtained as the questionnaire data were collected using an online questionnaire tool, which gathers data anonymously.' Even if the data are collected anonymously, we would expect participants to have provided consent to fill out the questionnaire. Often, completing and submitting a questionnaire is considered implied consent. We would therefore appreciate it if you could update the consent statement in your manuscript to clearly indicate whether you obtained explicit or implied consent.

   • We have included the following statement: Implied consent was obtained as the questionnaire data were collected using an optional online questionnaire tool which gathers data anonymously.

3. Competing interests: manuscripts should include a 'Competing interests' section. This should be placed after the Conclusions/Abbreviations. Please consider the following questions and include a declaration of competing interests in your manuscript:

   • We have included a statement that all authors have no competing interests to report.

We also removed the figure (Box 1) from the manuscript and uploaded it separately. We are confident that the content of this proposed manuscript would be of significant interest to readers of BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth, and look forward to hearing your response to our submission. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Rachel VanderKruik, MSc

On behalf of:
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