Reviewer's report

Title: Cost-effectiveness of strategies to improve the utilization and provision of maternal and newborn health care in low-income and lower-middle-income countries: a systematic review

Version: 2
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Reviewer: julia walsh

Reviewer's report:

No revisions required.

This is a systematic review article which entails some independent research in the collation and analysis of the results from other studies.

In reviewing the 9 questions that the editors pose to the reviewers when assessing this manuscript, I find that the authors have clearly and carefully addressed Questions 1 and 2.

For Question 3, the authors describe clearly the limitations of the data. The data upon which this systematic review is based vary from low to high quality, and the authors list this attribute in the tables. The methods suggest that the authors did not even include in this review those articles that were even lower in quality than those included here.

Questions 4 through 6 are well addressed by the authors. For question 7, the authors do not describe other related published work, but this review stands apart from those and does not build substantially on other work.

The authors have addressed the issues in Questions 8 and 9.

Comment: I recommend that BMC publish this article since this is an issue of importance for the poorest countries about resource allocation for improvement in MNH. The results are disappointing in their lack of generalizability and in the relatively poor quality of many of the studies. I agree with the authors that the finding of only studies which demonstrate some level of cost-effectiveness strongly suggests a bias in what studies are submitted for publication and finally published. The authors mention and address these issues.

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

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.