Reviewer's report

Title: Malaria treatment in the retail sector: drug sellers' knowledge and practices in rural Tanzania

Version: 1 Date: 27 January 2008

Reviewer: Elfatih Mohamed Malik

Reviewer's report:

With reference to the article entitled "Malaria treatment in the retail sector: Drug sellers' knowledge and practices in rural Tanzania" and with reference to your guide for assessing manuscripts, the authors are fulfilling all the requirements and their work is suitable for publication with minor essential revisions. These are stated in the following points:

1. Authors need to be consistent in the presentation of their data. As an example: in the result section, they in some situations used percentage only (eg In drug stores, 65.5% mentioned SP as the recommended treatment for a child aged 2 years and 79.3% for an adult) and in another situation they used both percentages and absolute figures (eg In drug stores, 19 or 65.5% of the shop keepers said they would refer customers if they showed signs of severe malaria, in general shops this was indicated by 259 or 56.3%)

2. Authors sometimes presented 95% CI (eg Mystery shoppers obtained drugs in 53 (54.1%, 95% CI 62.1-96.8) general shops and 17 (85.0%, 43.7-64.2) drug stores (P=0.01) (Table 3)) and sometimes missed that (eg Of those who mentioned SP, 78.9% knew the correct child dose in drug stores and 26.8% in general shops (P<0.001). They need to present it all the time.

Elfatih M Malik (MD)
Director, CDC at FMOH
Khartoum Sudan

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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'