Reviewer’s report

Title: Estimates of delays in diagnosis of cervical cancer in Nepal

Version: 2 Date: 18 December 2013

Reviewer: Adeola Olaitan

Reviewer’s report:

Cervical cancer is an important health problem, particularly in the developing world and thus this paper should be considered after major revision.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The grammar needs to be revised for clarity
   e.g. Abstract – Cervical cancer is the first leading cause… - repetitive –first can be omitted. The following sentence could also be better worded e.g. the long symptom to diagnosis interval means that women have advanced disease at presentation

Background: Although cervical cancer is the most curable… - could be better worded

Also the sentence ‘Earlier diagnosis and treatment of cancer could result in lower stages and less intensive treatment’ should be split as it deals with 2 different issues

‘In Nepal most cervical cancer patients….’ Should be disease onset not ‘initiation’

Discussion ‘Diagnostic delay quite higher…’ The word quite should be removed

2. Methods:
   Confusing description in abstract and this may reflect the methodology
   For example the authors have not described their sampling method – random? If so how was randomisation achieved
   ?consecutive – if so over what time period
   What is the denominator i.e. how many patients in total were treated over that time period?

Operational Definitions
   These definitions need to be clarified as the rest of the paper makes no sense otherwise

Why has 60 days been chosen as the definition of delay?

Short referral delay – Up to 7 days – Referral within 7 days would not be considered a delay in any healthcare system

Total diagnostic delay 90 days or less – this could be 1 day in which case there is no delay
Thus the authors should reclassify into delay or no delay, specifying & justifying time periods selected. Having done this, they can tabulate results looking at stage at diagnosis & outcome

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

No conflicts