Reviewer’s report

Title: Empirical studies on informal patient payments for health care services: A systematic and critical review of research methods and instruments

Version: 3 Date: 20 July 2010

Reviewer: Olga Siskou

Reviewer’s report:

Although, the journal does not prefer to publish review articles, this one consists, a systematic effort to analyze the rapidly growing phenomenon, of informal payments in health sector. In this point of view, I believe that it could be published after minor revisions:

Abstract

In the section of methods (pg 2), authors must write that there were no limitations with regard to the year of publication, as they mention in pg7.

In the section of results (pg 2), authors have to add some examples of the methodological difficulties in measuring informal patient payments. As they have stated above, the analysis of key methodological difficulties is one of the objectives of the study.

1. Introduction

When authors refer to certain countries, is preferable to write the name of the country and then to indicate the full reference, by using the respective number. This is the case in third line of introduction, where authors are prompt to write Kazakhstan and then the reference number.

2. Definition of informal payments

Please, note that the concept of corruption (second paragraph of pg 5) is wider than the sense of informal payments.

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