Reviewer’s report

Title: Integration of TB service in the general hospital in China: understanding the views and experiences from health professionals

Version: 1 Date: 15 October 2011

Reviewer: Ari Probandari

Reviewer’s report:

The authors provide interesting and important research question particularly in TB service. However, many issues of methods and data should be more clearly defined, described and discussed.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. As a reader, I would like to read the general issues of integration of health service first, then coming into specific issue of TB program in China. Please reorder the introduction so that the general issues come earlier than the specific issues of TB program in China.

2. The authors use the term ‘integration’ in title and most texts of the manuscript. I think the authors should add the definition of integration in the introduction in order to get readers understand about its meaning. I suggest that the authors refer to Alexsson and Alexsson (2006) on the definition of integration. Using the reference from Alexsson & Alexsson (2006), the authors can clarify and revisit the use of “collaboration” and “coordination” concepts in proper way.

3. Introduction, Page 1: I perceived that the sentence “In most of China, the local CDC provides both clinical care and public health care for TB cases” is unclear. The authors should add 1-2 sentences following the sentence to describe that sentence.

4. I find that the authors use the word ‘integrated model’ (see abstract, background) and ‘designated approach’ (see page 6, Para #2). Are these similar?

5. The authors should provide statements on the difference between the new model (Figure 2) and the old model (Figure 1).

6. What is new knowledge derived from this research? The authors should state about the added knowledge by this research explicatively in the end of the
7. Under the methods section, the authors have to add the description of ‘the health care system in China’ as research setting in order to help the readers to understand the results. Are there public and private hospitals? Are the models in figure 1 and figure 2 applicable for both public and private hospitals? How about the health financing system in China? I think the description about the setting of the two districts and the hospitals in the study will be useful to interpret some issues in the discussion part e.g. “Managing the vertical service which is part of the CDC system is obviously easier than coordinating the horizontal health service…etc” (Page 18); and the term “general TB patients” within the quotation on Page 14.

8. Page 8, Study Design: The authors mentioned that this study is a case study. Please refer to Yin’s description about a case study research design (Yin, 2009). In case study, it is important to have multiple data/evidence-sources. I perceived that this study is not a case study. I suggest the authors to write that it is a qualitative study, since the authors used only in-depth interviews in the data collection.

9. Page 9, data collection: Did the authors interview the hospital directors? If they did not, what is/are the reason(s)? If the authors did not include the hospital directors as key informants of the study, what are the limitations due to that?

10. Page 11, results: How the authors come to the theme health system context? I perceived it is rather unclear logical thinking if we come to the theme ‘health system context’ while the categories under the theme is ‘motivation for integration’. Therefore, I also suggest the authors to add a table consists of the example of question in the interview, the answer, the codes and categories derived from the answers and the link to the theme.

11. Page 12, results: “This criticism was not untrue as the CDC staff admitted…”. It is rather unfair to judge about “true and untrue” in a qualitative research. I suggest the authors to not use the word “untrue” and revise into more “neutral words” e.g. “The CDC staff have a different perspective in regard to the treatment delivery etc.”

12. Do you find any barrier of mistrust between the CDC and hospital staff from your study? Please reflect the findings from Probandari et al (2011) and De Costa et al (2008).

13. Page 11-12, results: The description of ‘the motivation for integration’ is limited from the CDC staffs’ perspective. How about the perspective/motivation of hospital staffs in regard to the integration?

14. Page 12, Para #2: What is “traditional (CDC) approach”? Please use a consistent word all the long of manuscript to point the old model and the new model of the integration.

15. Page 13, Para #1: Why the hospitals agree to provide extra budget for supervision? Can the authors link this finding to ‘the motivation for integration?’

16. Page 19 Para#2: The authors argue on nice ideas about “the structure of the integrated model is inherently associated with the combination of the public
health strength of the CDC and clinical strength of the hospital for effective TB control”. However, which findings which refer to this discussion? The authors should elaborate it in the paragraph and put other references that support to their ideas.

17. The generic model in Figure 3 is rather unclear. Referring to Alexsson & Alexsson (2006), collaboration is one of types of integration. Thus, what is the difference between the arrow of integration and collaboration in the model?

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Page 3, Abstract: The authors used several abbreviations (e.g. CDC and TB) without presenting the stands of the abbreviations.

2. Page 4, Abstract; Page 20, Conclusion (line 2): There is a miss spelling of the word “scalp-up.”

3. Page 4, the title should be “Overview of TB service integration” instead of “Overview of service integration”.

4. Page 4, line 8 under Overview of service integration, the way to write the page is with “(P775)”, should be “p775” in order to be consistent with other writing of page e.g. “p28” (see line 11, in the same paragraph).

5. Page 8, under Study Design: There is a miss spelling of the word ‘organistional.’

6. Page 16, the first quotation: “Only for the bigger issues, would we invite the health bureau to coordinate”. It should be “Only for the bigger issues, we would invite the health bureau to coordinate.”

7. Page 18, the first sentence in Para#2: should be “Firstly, during the initial….etc”.

8. Page 18, the first sentence in Para#3: should be “Secondly, resource allocation….etc”

9. Page 20, Conclusion: you have two ‘full stops’ in the end of the last sentence in the conclusion. Please check and edit the texts again to avoid miss spelling and falses of writing.

10. Page 25, Box 1, line 6: please revise the writing “mergedinto” into “merge into”.

Reference


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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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.