Reviewer’s report

Title: The experience of community health workers training in Iran: a qualitative study

Version: 1 Date: 10 June 2012

Reviewer: Frank De Paepe

Reviewer’s report:

1. This article is of interest for all who are concerned with better access to basic health care for all, and with improving quality of basic health care. The question posed by the study is: How different components of training have impacted on VHW performance and satisfaction? The subtitle might read as: matching CHW qualification with community needs.
2. Some very minor editing corrections are needed, like article use.
3. Applied methods and data are sound. Sources are acknowledged and limitations of the study are stated. This qualitative study might nevertheless have presented more statistical analysis of collected data (regression analysis, score matching).
4. With more demanding criteria of intake and better organised long term training, with enough flexibility for adaptation to local situations, Iran seems to have CHW offering well accepted service.
5. The challenge will be to address ever greater needs at the basic level of health care (including NCD) and to offer supportive and efficient follow-up by qualified health staff.
6. The study shows that, subject to political commitment and resource reallocation, a national program with well-developed guidelines can provide a model for attenuating HW shortage.
7. The findings support the feasibility, especially in rural areas, through the use of trained community health-care personnel, and their inclusion in the health system, of the provision of basic health care services to the population.
8. With adequate level at intake and formal and continuous training, the standard of care at community level can be upgraded and include the challenge of increasing needs for NCD care.
9. The crisis of HR for Health is world-wide, and we need to keep an open mind for innovative and effective solutions.

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