Reviewer’s report

Title: Addressing maternal healthcare through demand side financial incentives: experience of Janani Suraksha Yojana Program in India

Version: 2 Date: 5 April 2012

Reviewer: Sanjay Rai

Reviewer’s report:

1. Title of the study: Appropriate.
2. Abstract:
   • Abstract summarizes the manuscript completely.
   • In the result section 95% CI has to be included wherever applicable
   • The word “and” can be removed from the sentence ‘the incentive induced fresh Out of pocket spending’ or can be modified as per authors view in the result paragraph.
   • Restriction of decimal uniformly to either first place was followed which allows for better comprehension.
3. Introduction:
   • Background information was presented to clarify the purpose of the study.
   • The word “present study” in the place of “this article” will sound better in the last para of introduction.
4. Methodology:
   • To add the word low performing state (LPS) to the first sentence in the first para of materials and method section, as cash assistance is available for only 2 births in HPS. Similarly JSY addresses SC and ST mothers in HPS in addition to BPL mothers and hence last sentence of first para also requires correction.
   • To expand GoI to Government of India when used for the first time to allow better comprehension for readers outside India.
   • For better flow, sampling strategy should be explained before detailing study setting, as selection of state was included in the first stage of sampling.
   • Explanation and Revision of sentences is required to bring further clarity in the sampling section.
   • Justification for selecting only three districts and half of rural and urban blocks if possible will be appreciated.
   • Details of split up of number of FGDs among JSY beneficiaries and ASHA if provided will be appreciated (though provided in table 1). As FGDs are done on homogenous group, the sentence has to be reframed so that it comes out clear that FGDs on ASHAs and JSY beneficiaries were conducted separately.
   • Discussions with ASHAs provided information rather than sought information in
the FGD section.

- Emerging themes instead of emerging trends (though trends are also acceptable) in the key informant interview section.

5. Results:

- Results relevant to the objectives were presented.
- Operational definition for below poverty line if mentioned will be appreciated.
- It appears from the table 2 that data was extracted for the whole state of Orissa from HMIS so the same has to be explained clearly in the methods section otherwise there is tendency for the readers to relate the extracted data for the selected districts.
- The word time to be replaced with childbirth or pregnancy in appropriate places.
- Justification for comparing OOPs for JSY supported and JSY non supported institutional deliveries as both are temporally different and inflation and recall bias has to be accounted.

6. Discussion:

- Possible biases if any were not discussed.
- The word confounding has to be replaced with various in the last line of discussion part.

**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