Reviewer’s report

Title: Quality of antenatal care services at public health facilities of Bahir-Dar Special Zone, Northwest Ethiopia.

Version: 1 Date: 3 May 2013

Reviewer: Oystein Evjen Olsen

Reviewer’s report:

The question posed by the authors is well defined, dividing into quality measured against WHO standards and quality measured against client satisfaction.

I have the following comments:

Major compulsory revisions:

1. The conclusion in the abstract does not reflect findings and discussion on client satisfaction. The article defines well the question posed, of which quality measured against client satisfaction is one of the two main aspects studied. The other being quality against WHO standards.

2. The introduction, methods and discussion refer to outdated methodology, aims and references in general. The newest reference is from 2005. There exists a wide range of descriptions of ANC levels of care, survey methodology and findings (for discussion) in later published reports. These exist both from Ethiopia and from developing countries in general. The article cannot be published without major revision reflecting newer trends in methods, standards and levels of care found. Many of these are published in open source journals, as well as on WHO / UNFPA / United Nations Population Fund, and others websites. I would add that the content of the article is still interesting, and valid, and the authors should not be discouraged in terms of the interest within the global and national community towards their findings. These should however be presented in the context of recent policies and findings to be policy relevant.

3. Under the section “study setting” the article also needs to set the stage in terms of other services possibly being available for mothers. These include private and not-for-profit services. The article limits the study to governmental services. The limitation must be discussed in the context of other available services mothers can choose from, or utilize.

4. The study interviews only one ANC provider at each facility. This is described as a qualitative method using in-depth interviews. The number of respondents being limited to one per facility should be described in the limitations of the study. Identification is described as being “purposive sampling” without further mention of criteria used.

5. The source or further methodological description of the questions used in the exit interview (client satisfaction survey) needs to be clear.

6. The results section has several repetitions and unclear sectioning of the
results. Formal education and urban dwellers are mentioned twice. There is also no reference to the importance or usefulness of the term “house wives”. It could be suggested that the results are formatted to fit with other, frequently used headings – such as number of married, level of education, employment (formal, non-formal), distance to facility, number of children, and head of household. In any case the headings should enable comparison with frequently published articles on the same subject.

Minor essential revisions:
1. Unclear sentence under heading “sample size”.
2. It is recommended that the article is reviewed for improved language and grammar.
3. The discussion section could also be reviewed to reduce the repetition of results, previously reported in the results section.
4. An attempt should be made to describe the generalizability of the findings to similar settings, as well as in comparison with the level of care described elsewhere in Ethiopia, or against Government policies and national standards should published articles not be found on the subject.

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

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

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.