Reviewers report

Title: Provision of Youth Friendly Services in rural South Africa

Version: 2  Date: 4 March 2014

Reviewer: Terryann Clark

Reviewers report:

Major compulsory revision

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   The intent is much clearer now, but I think there needs to be additional clarification with aims 1 and 2. There are 3 aims. 1. Describe the characteristics of primary care facilities 2. Investigate the proportion of facilities providing YFS and 3. Barriers and facilitators to providing YFS.

   Aim 1 – the characteristics of publicly funded facilities is a very wide statement. Is this in reference to YFS criterion? The way that it is currently written makes it look like a mixed method study i.e. an audit against the YFS programme criteria AND interviews with staff. When you use the word ‘proportion’, this is usually not expected in a qualitative study utilising interviews. And you would expect a criterion with the proportion of services that achieved those indicators – a table of criterion alongside whether they achieved or did not achieve these criteria. See line 243 – where you state >90% of the adolescent friendly standards. There is nothing else in the interview where you say you check with these criteria. Rather you could say from your interviews, ‘participants perceptions were that only two facilities had ever provided YFS and only one was currently providing these services. These criterion were not checked I assume.

   Since this is a qualitative study I wonder if you should combine aims 1 & 2 with something like... “Describe the uptake and adherence to the Youth Friendly Services programme by primary healthcare facilities.”

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   If the authors maintain the current aims – then the methods reflected are inappropriate. Additional methods for how data was collated with regard to YFS (line 243) criteria would be needed - ? audit

Minor essential revision

I liked to inclusion of quotes. May be an issue of privacy ‘Sister Rebecca’ on line 276? Could state that this is not her real name or use a pseudonym.

In the abstract under results (line 47) – I would be careful about this statement as you can not verify the criteria for whether they achieved the criterion or not. I would soften this to say ‘participants largely felt that the YFS was not implanted
into their primary care facilities with the exception on one clinic’. Keep the focus on what participants said.

I think the recommendations are sound and are important.
I think maybe you should amend the conclusion in the abstract (lines 55 and 56) as it assumes that you have measured against some criteria. Rather you could say that ‘participants reported that the YFS programme was not well implemented and suggests the DOH target of 70% adherence to the programme were not achieved. From your qualitative results you cannot conclude that the criteria were met.

Conclusions could be a bit more concise and reflected in the abstract.

I also wonder the title is appropriate – this paper really is about the lack of implementation of youth friendly services in the region and it gives really good evidence about the barriers and facilitators to implementing such programmes. I’m sure this is not unique to your region and there are lessons here for others wanting to implement such programmes. I wonder whether a title that reflects this more e.g. “Barriers and facilitators to implementing a Youth Friendly Services in rural South Africa” – just a thought.

Well done in resubmitting the article!

**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