Reviewer's report

Title: Cost and efficiency of public sector sexually transmitted infection clinics in Andhra Pradesh, India

Version: 1 Date: 5 July 2005

Reviewer: Søren Holm

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an interesting paper on an important issue. The research is well planned and conducted.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
I assume that the research has approval from an ethics committee, and that all participant's have given their informed consent. This should be stated in the "Data collection procedures" section.

On page 12 the author's calculate the possible increase in numbers of STIs detected and treated if underperforming clinics moved to the optimal number of patients treated by doctor fte. But if their argument on page 9 is correct and the upper limit of the optimal number is based on patient safety considerations, then it is a problem that some clinics treat considerably more patients than they should given their doctor ftes. Should these overperforming clinics not reduce the number of patients they see, and how would that affect the possible total increase?

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
The authors should consider not publishing the map. Based on the map, and the data presented concerning the clinics I am fairly certain that a person knowledgeable about local conditions can identify all or most of the clinics, and there is thus no true anonymity for the clinics.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests