Reviewer's report

Title: Health care user satisfaction in South Africa

Version: 1 Date: 8 February 2009

Reviewer: Charles Darby

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Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Author states objective quite clearly as establishing difference by socio-demographic characteristics and comparing public and private services. But much of the discussion focuses on comparison to other countries' outcomes. There is little discussion of the implications of the findings relative to the stated objectives. The discussion does not explore the findings of the study relative to its objectives adequately. Reducing or eliminating comparison to other countries' findings would provide space to cover the findings relative to the objectives. Author could discuss the implications of these findings for health care in the country.

2. The finding that there were no significant differences between socio-demographic variables runs quite contrary to most of the research in this field. It is particularly critical to the findings here because of the comparison of public and private services. One sees differences in the socio-demographic make up of those attending the different types facilities. If there are differences that are somehow missed, this may negate the findings. If there are truly no differences, the author needs to discuss reasons that the commonly found relationship of socio-demographic and patients' evaluation of their health care are not apparent here. There may be definite cultural differences that account for the findings.

3. The limitations of the study are not mentioned and need to be.

4. A few examples of the survey items along with the response scales should be provided for context.

5. It would be useful to compare the findings of the principal component analysis in this study to other findings using this survey.

Minor essential Revisions

6. Other measures such as internal consistency should be addressed.

7. The writing is not always clear or well constructed. Careful editing should be done.

Discretionary Revisions

8. The surveys from which the WHO Responsiveness survey drew and Responsiveness survey itself approaches the measurement of the patient
experience not as satisfaction measurement, but as assessment of the patients' experience through reports and ratings. The author might want to consider changing the "satisfaction" orientation of the article.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

**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.