Reviewer's report

Title: Coping with uncertainty during healthcare-seeking. A qualitative study in Lao PDR.

Version: 2 Date: 18 August 2012

Reviewer: Shams Arifeen

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
None

Minor Essential Revisions
The first line of Conclusion in the abstract reads "Care-seekers’ initial strong preference for local providers irrespective of the providers’ status of legitimacy indicates the need for a strong primary healthcare system." I was therefore expecting some discussion on the basis for this "need" and what the authors meant by a "strong" primary healthcare system. I was disappointed. By design, the authors have adopted an interpretive approach to the data analysis and presentation of results, which has been done exceptionally well and I enjoyed reading it. However, the discussion section suffers from being largely a summary/repeat of the results. The statement made by authors and which I quoted above, illustrates the missed opportunity here. Just because there is a strong preference for local providers, does not mean that these communities will take equally to a strong primary health care system. The results presented in the paper identify a set of issues that strongly influence health care seeking practices and it would have helped to see a discussion of the attributes such a primary health care system would need to have to address these issues adequately, if at all. This is especially true in this context as primary health care often means different things to different people. The question that has not been answered is what does all these mean for the design of an effective health care system.

Apart from this, this is an excellent manuscript, well designed, analyzed and written.

Discretionary Revisions
None

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 have no competing interest