Reviewer's report

Title: The role of regulation in influencing income-generating activities amongst public sector doctors in Peru

Version: 1 Date: 6 August 2006

Reviewer: Qingyue Meng

Reviewer's report:

General
The article has addressed an interesting issue about dual job holding among public sector doctors in Peru. Using qualitative method in the data collection and analysis, nature of the dual practice and influence from the regulation are explored, which provides good base for further studies. Findings of the study are well discussed and the conclusions are sensible.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. In the historical background section, it would be helpful for understanding the context of the study if more information on Peruvian health care system such as public-private mix, payment levels to doctors in both public and private practice, and self-regulations on dual practice by the public health facilities, is provided.

2. In the method section, it is not clear why twenty doctors were selected into the sample for interviews. Justifications, for example, whether or not the sample size was set according to scope of the types of practitioners or the number of questions that are used for interviews, are needed. Furthermore, how interviewees were “purposively” selected needs to be explained with presentation of the criteria for sample selection. Is background of the interviewees considered, including their experiences in dual practice, specialty, and professional/official positions?

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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)

1. In the subsection of “attitudes toward, and influence of, regulation on such activity”, major findings were cited from the policy makers. Are there any more respondents from other category of the interviewees that could be added?

2. In the discussion section, limitations of the study were discussed, including the generalisability of the findings. What is the confidence that the findings can reflect the issue for metropolitan Lima?

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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, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.