Reviewer's report

Title: Code E.4 Human Resources for Maternal Health: Multi-purpose or Specialist?

Version: 1 Date: 4 April 2008

Reviewer: Deborah Maine

Reviewer's report:

This article raises several very important questions in the field of maternal mortality reduction globally. As it now stands, however, addressing these questions makes up only a small part of the article, and the answers are not fully developed. Moreover, the article remains rather vague, on a number of levels.

• What tasks, exactly, are required for a provider to qualify as having midwifery skills? These should be set out in a table.

• Be more specific about what the two trends are today – multipurpose workers versus skilled attendants – give crisp examples

• Go into more detail about the country examples that you use – what the history of midwifery was there, what the situation is now, what is needed.

I think a short, to-the-point commentary by these authors about the importance of really skilled attendants working in functioning health systems would be a great addition to the literature

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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