Reviewer's report

Title: Reviewing The Benefits of Health Workforce Stability

Version: 1 Date: 13 August 2010

Reviewer: Mwansa Annette Nkowane

Reviewer's report:

This paper reports on data from the western countries and it should be clearly specified in the introduction. The authors have clearly demonstrated the issue. There are some few issues that may need to be included or better explained.

All minor essential revisions
1. Issue of work overload and its impact on service delivery and patients' health outcomes could be addressed in the background of the document
2. On page three reference is made to a US study, perhaps more information on why there were lower turn over rates vs higher turn over rates in this specific context should be indicated.
3. On page 5 the discussion on the limitation of the standard measure of turnover is not explained properly.
4. On page 6 -7 an assumption is made why there is much more stability among doctors. If this is a literature review, can this be verified?. Furthermore the discussion here is misleading as it could be implied that nurses are support staff. This is not correct. The sentence making reference to support staff should be reworded to avoid giving this impression.
5. The authors indicate that the benefits of some level of turn over can "include freeing up of posts......". This issue could potentially be problematic in countries experiencing human resources crisis. It is obvious that this is not one suggestion to be considered, but if maintained here, it still requires caution in the way it is stated.
6. One issue in cost calculation in that the cost of training of the health worker in not included and yet it is an important one. In some countries most health worker training is sponsored by the government. Should this not be captured in the cost calculation? It may be good to explore other areas that could be included in the cost analysis
7. Lastly Table 2 the first bullet may indicate that practice health workers have old knowledge. This is not totally correct especially where continuous educational programmes exist. Please clarify this issue. It is also important to mention that the benefits could be temporary if measures to maintain then are not in place.
8. Overall the paper should reflect on the global context of human resources for health. I suggest to include a brief reference to this in the back ground information.
9. Some typos noted which I am sure will be taken care of.

**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 have no competing interests