Reviewer's report

Title: Tracking and Monitoring the Nursing and Midwifery Workforce: Implementation and Analysis of a New Human Resources Information System (HRIS) in Uganda

Version: 1 Date: 13 August 2010

Reviewer: Scott Barnhart

Reviewer's report:

Recommend: Publish if essential revisions are satisfactorily completed.

This is a descriptive study of the implementation of a human resource tracking system which was implemented at the Uganda Nurses and Midwives Council. The article provides important documentation of the process for implementation, some system design, and a description of the data and numbers of nurses entered into the system. As the authors point out there are multiple stakeholders, (UNMC, MOH, employers, nurses etc). The ability of the system to serve these stakeholders and to also shape policy needs greater amplification in the introduction and discussion and conclusions.

There are several ways this article could be strengthened.

1. Describe the UNMC in greater detail. What is statutory authority of the council? How does it relate to the MOH. How does it relate to licensure and how does it serve as a repository for information for hiring? What services does the council provide (noted in the article are test fee receipts- are tests given).

2. The UNMC should be described in the context of the Ugandan Health system.

3. Describe any activities of UNMC around accreditation. In the table it notes who has graduated. Are there criteria for accrediting schools and is that necessary to register a person in the data base.

4. Along with the helpful clarification of definitions of enrolled and registered please include licensure.

5. Describe in detail (perhaps as an appendix) the data fields collected;

6. Describe the process for ascertaining data quality.

7. Describe in greater detail limitations. How much can or cannot be learned about whether someone is actually working, where they are working, or whether they are even in the country or alive?

8. Perhaps consider a section on improvements based on preliminary uses.

9. There is a considerable drop off from enrollment to graduation to licensure. This drop off needs to be explained. Does it represent poor data capture or poor rates of progression through the educational system.
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

Yes. I work for University of Washington, I-TECH which supports TRAINSMART
a "training" database which collects complementary information to that being
described as collected for UNMC.