Reviewer's report

Title: Innovative Health Service Delivery Models in Low and Middle Income Countries - What can we learn from the private sector?

Version: 1 Date: 25 March 2010

Reviewer: David Peters

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions:
None

Minor Essential Revisions:
None

Discretionary Revisions:

1. It would be helpful to see more information to demonstrate the ways in which these 10 organizations are high performing (e.g. clinical, public health, financial or other parameters), as well as more details about their impact, which is partly shown in the table.

2. If any analysis included an assessment about the market environment in which these innovators worked, it would be helpful to know about the role of possible competitors or collaborators in their operations. There is likely to be some variation in the case studies, and it would be informative to the reader to know if this is the case, and how it influences the way in which these innovators have operated.

3. It would be useful to relate these findings with other research on improving health services in low and middle income countries. For example, the finding (page 14) that there appears to be no single effective approach to improved service delivery is not unique to private sector innovations. The authors may consider, for example, a recent global review of approaches to strengthening health services had similar findings across a wide range of health services and organizational approaches: Peters, D.H., El-Saharty, S., Siadat, B., Janovsky, K., Vujicic, M. Improving Health Services in Developing Countries: From Evidence to Action. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2009. (Declaration - I am author on this)

4. On page 15, the description of these vertical approaches merits further description. Have these innovators tried to develop vertically integrated operations, and now one question remains as to how they can integrate with other actors and health services?

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 declare that I have no competing interests'