Reviewer’s report

Title: Towards elimination of maternal deaths: maternal deaths surveillance and response

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Reviewer: Maurice Bucagu

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Paper:
Towards elimination of maternal deaths: maternal deaths surveillance and response

Sennen Hounton et al.

The strong point of this review paper is that it provides the rationale for the need to develop a ‘Maternal Death Surveillance and Response’ (MDSR) in countries with high burden of maternal morbidity and mortality. The authors propose a step by step approach for MDSR implementation in the context of accountability framework.

Overall remarks

The limitation of this paper is that it does not clearly address the relationship between effective MDSR implementation and quality of care – an essential factor for improving maternal and perinatal health outcomes.

Specific aspects

Introduction

Consider introducing the concept of quality of care as potential impact of effective MDSR implementation.

First line: Maternal mortality is the target of one of the least successful Millennium Goals (MDG). Suggest the following: ‘of all MDGs, Improving maternal health (MDG5) is the least likely to be achieved’…

1. Eliminating maternal mortality

Page 2, para 1: MMR less or equal to 50/100,000 by 2030: Please provide source/reference.

Establishing MDSR

Page 5 figure 1: In lieu of ‘Develop pregnancy-related deaths case definitions; consider using ‘identification of maternal deaths’ (as used in table 1) (based on existing pregnancy-related deaths case definitions / ICD10 – WHO publication).
Page 5 – Box: % districts which conducted MDSR. Need to capture the fact that MDSR is actually conducted in all facilities of the district.

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'