Reviewer's report

Title: Use of the modified World Health Organization (WHO) partograph during labour in public health institutions of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Version: 1 Date: 27 February 2013

Reviewer: Matthews Mathai

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Major comments:

The authors report on the "use" of the modified WHO partograph during labour but report only on completeness of recordings. Was the partograph used only for recording events in labour OR was it used primarily as a tool to guide the management of labour? If it was only the former, the study title should refer to completion of partographs and not to "use".

Selection: Overall 420 partographs were reviewed. However, the selection methods described are confusing. For example, on pg 7, "the study subjects were comprised of a random sample of the modified WHO partograph". Further down the same page, it states that the study included "all the modified partographs with complete and partially complete information from the selected public health institutions and excluded those the modified WHO partographs which had no information recorded on them such as partograph sheets on which only delivery summary is recorded...". There are also several exclusion criteria. On Pg 8 and 9, there is reference to a multi-stage sampling technique.

Were entire records classified as substandard if they did not meet "any one of the protocol standards" or had "parts misplaced/missing or inadequate" (Pg 9) OR the recordings for each variable considered standard/substandard as reported in Table 3. If it the latter, the description should be revised in the text on Pg 9.

Level of interest: Reject as not of sufficient priority to merit publishing in this journal

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests