Reviewer’s report

Title: Does the use of modern Family Planning promote healthy timing and spacing of pregnancy in Dar es Salaam?

Version: Date: 2 November 2013

Reviewer: James Kiarie

Reviewer’s report:

1. Major Compulsory Revisions
   • The question is well defined however a study restricted to antenatal patients may not be the best to answer this question especially regarding adherence to timing. The authors will have to consider whether timing adherence needs to be included as an outcome
   • It is not clear what factors are adjusted for in the adjusted analysis this needs to be specified.
   • The finding that Primigravida at higher risk of non adherence to timing likely to be confounded by age it is not clear if age included in adjusted model and should be included
   • In the analysis regarding spacing the Primigravida are excluded since they are not at risk however in the analysis of timing those over 18 and under 35 are included yet they are not at risk. The study as designed cannot answer the question of whether FP promotes good timing or not. The best design would be one comparing participants who became pregnant with those who did not
   • The timing of use of FP needs to be clear as to whether the women stopped to become pregnant or suffered method failure.
   • The conclusion negating a causal relationship maybe difficult to support from a cross sectional study and this needs to be modified

2. Minor Essential Revisions
   • The limitation of analysis of spacing to 24-60 months limits the power of the analysis would have been important to see if the use of FP resulted in longer interpregnancy interval even though it may not have reached the threshold of 24-60 months
   • A major limitation of the study is reliance on self reported data which may have affected the results and should be acknowledged
   • In the abstract the terms non adherence to timing and spacing need to be clearly defined
   • Table 1 should describe the entire study population rather than compare the Primigravida and the ever pregnant since this was not an objective of the study

3. Discretionary Revisions
• The modern FP methods are not clearly defined as to whether they included condoms

• It is more correct to state that Timing, spacing and limiting of pregnancy are key outcomes rather than strategies for family planning (FP)

**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:**

I declare that I have no competing interests