Author's response to reviews

Title: A spatial analysis to study access to emergency obstetric transport services under the public private "Janani Express Yojana (JE)" program in two districts of Madhya Pradesh, India.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
To

The Editor in Chief,
Reproductive Health

Please find enclosed herewith a manuscript entitled: “A spatial analysis to study access to emergency obstetric transport services under the public private “Janani Express Yojana (JE)” program in two districts of Madhya Pradesh, India.” submitted for publication as Research Article in the Journal Reproductive Health. We declare that the manuscript has not been published elsewhere and has not been submitted for publication elsewhere.

We are transferring this manuscript as per suggestion from BMC International Journal of Health Geographics (IJHG).

An estimated 340,000 women die annually world-wide from pregnancy related complications. More than half of these deaths occur within six low middle income countries (LMIC) and one-quarter of global maternal deaths occur in India. Cost of transport, challenging diverse geographical terrain, poor communication process, and suboptimal distribution and location of health facilities are the documented explanations for these deaths in LMICs. These deaths could be prevented if functional transport services were in place to allow pregnant women to gain access to emergency obstetric care (EmOC). A large scale public private partnership led by the Department of Health in a central Indian province of Madhya Pradesh (MP) is an example of a recent innovation in providing accessible emergency obstetric transport. While this intervention obviously addresses the need for emergency obstetric transport, there has been no critical evaluation of this model. With this background the present study was done in Madhya Pradesh province in India with the aim to describe uptake, geographic equity in access and time taken by the service to transport women to a facility in two districts of MP. This was a cross sectional survey of 468 mothers delivered 61 EmOC facilities.

We are of the view that findings of this research should be communicated to a wider audience so that more studies are taken up to confirm /reject our findings. We also feel that with its interdisciplinary approach and wide audience, publication of this article in `Reproductive Health` will get the attention it deserves.

Sincerely

Vishal Diwan
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26/11/2013