Reviewer's report

Title: Ancillary Benefits of Antenatal Ultrasound: The Association Between the Introduction of Low-Cost Antenatal Ultrasound and an Increase in the Numbers of Women Receiving Recommended Antenatal Treatments, a Retrospective Study

Version: 3
Date: 31 October 2014
Reviewer: Elizabeth McClure

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions
The Methods Section describes in detail the ultrasound, but does not address the methods for the study which is presented, i.e., the utilization of antenatal care services. It would be helpful to have a description of the data collection on the services, who the data collectors were, why only a few of the services are presented (not all as listed in the background, i.e., tetanus, syphilis, etc. are missing), the time-period, etc.

Table 1 - the months for the "pre"-period are not consistent and it is not clear why this is the case. If 22 months are the post-period, it seems like it would be most consistent to use the 22 mos. for all in the pre-period also.

The mechanism by which improved ANC services, which are completely unrelated to ultrasound, may be associated with ultrasound is not addressed. The authors may want to address the reasons for the cause (i.e., was more attention to the clinic a driver for the MOH to provide additional services, were other programs implemented, was it other temporal shifts in policy, etc.). Since this study was only conducted in one clinic it should be relatively straightforward to add additional detail to this section.

The authors should add the population in the catchment area of the health clinic. Have there been changes or growth in the population over the time period of the pre-post study?

Minor revisions

The conclusions that the ultrasound program has potential to improve health is not shown in this study.

The pre-post design is a limitation as we don't know if changes in the services reflect other changes in health policy, payment for services, cash-incentives to receive services at health centers, etc.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest
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.