Reviewer's report

Title: Caesarean section rates in Mozambique 1995-2011

Version: 2 Date: 18 June 2015

Reviewer: Jenny Gamble

Reviewer's report:

This is a really interesting well written paper - thank you - it was a pleasure to read.

Minor Essential Revisions

1) Since midwives are the key primary maternity care provider and their role includes assessment and referral for complications and facilitating access to additional services, midwives should be discusses in the Introduction section - even if there aren't any midwives. Line 50 touches on health policy development. This is an important topic and provides an additional reason to include some introduction to midwives and midwifery in Mozambique.

Discretionary Revisions

1) The evidence about "maternal wishes" is less robust than evidence about physician related factors influencing the C-section rate. Issues such as what constitutes choice, are women choosing C-section or avoiding vaginal birth because of harsh and unsafe normal birth services etc make is difficult to attribute "maternal wishes" as a driver of c-section rates. Therefore, this non-medical factor should be listed last in the sentence referring to the rise of C-section rates in both the Introduction (line 13) and Discussion (line 290). The word "possible" could be included preceding the use of the term "maternal wishes" to indicate some ambiguity of the findings on this factor as a driver of c-section rates.

2) Line 20 Introduction - consider using "proliferation" instead of "blooming" a descriptor associated with the increase in private health services as "blooming" as positive connotations and proliferation is neutral.

3) Methods - line 70 - add "years" after the age range provided for men and women. Why does the age range vary?

4) It is interesting the DHS did not provide an option of birth at home - especially since this is common.

5) Results - line 179 - consider using "advantaged" instead of "advantageous"

6) Results - line 214 - consider using "surgical" instead of "surgery"

7) Discussion and conclusion - consider strengthening the statement about use of policy and funding arrangements to ensure women who need C-section and other services receive them and over-servicing (with all that entails) does not become more pronounced and is reversed.
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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.