Reviewer’s report

Title: A CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY OF MATERNAL NEAR MISS AND MORTALITY AT A RURAL TERTIARY CENTRE IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA

Version: 2 Date: 20 Dec 2016

Reviewer: Stacie Geller

Reviewer’s report:

Abstract: In the results section of the abstract, I recommend first describing the results of the mortality cases, and then the results of the morbidity cases. This will improve the clarity and flow of the results.

Background (para 1): In the last sentence, the authors describe percentages of women who attend ANC and have deliveries with skilled attendants. Are there differences by socioeconomic status and/or geographic location (urban versus rural)? If so, please describe. Given that inability to pay was documented as a patient factor, this is relevant to the reader and provides more context.

Background (para 5): The authors describe the "classic triad of delays," but provide minimal elaborations. Please provide the appropriate reference for the 3 delays model, as well as state the delays (Delay 1: Deciding to seek care; Delay 2: Identifying and reaching the medical facility; Delay 3: Receiving adequate and appropriate treatment. Thaddeus, S., & Maine, D. (1994). Too far to walk: maternal mortality in context. Social science & medicine, 38(8), 1091-1110).

Methods (study area): Are there any midwives in the Ob/Gyn department? If so, please include this information in the list of staff.

Methods (Methods/Study Procedure): Throughout this section, the authors describe recruitment procedures. However, as presented, there do not any consenting procedures, and this seems to be a chart/case review. Also, please describe the considerations for the subjects' privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity.

Methods (data analysis): The information about the ethical clearance does not belong in this section. I suggest moving this to the the Study procedure section, or create a unique section called "Human Subjects Research Protection," or something similar.

Results (para 1): I suggest restructuring the first paragraph to first describe the total number of deliveries during the study period, then the number of near miss and mortality events. Then, discuss the results in terms of all the mortalities, and then the near miss events. Then, clarify that the remainder of the results will be reporting on the 57 women with near miss or mortality.

Results (para 2): Please clarify that the denominator is 57.
Discussion (para 3): The authors state that "health institutions in rural Nigeria offer epileptic services to the populace because of the weak health sector and lack of political will." Regarding the use of "epileptic services" as a metaphor to describe the health system, I suggest using more objective language. What is it about the health institutions that are "epileptic"?

Conclusion (para 1): Sentence #3 is a bit unclear ("There are few functioning..."). Please clarify.

Table 1: Please correct the percentages for the Occupation variable. Semi-skilled is 24.6%, not 24.7%. Professional is 8.8%, not 8.7%.

Table 2: Please correct the percentages for the Trimester at Presentation variable. 1 is 15.8%, not 15.9%. 2 is 19.3%, not 19.2%.

Table 4: The total percentage for administrative delays is 100.1%. Please correct so the total is 100.0%

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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