Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Increasing Utilisation of Perinatal Services: Estimating the Impact of Community Health Worker program in Neno, Malawi

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 05 Feb 2019

**Reviewer:** Reviewer 2

**Reviewer's report:**

**PEER REVIEWER ASSESSMENTS:**

**OBJECTIVE** - Full research articles: is there a clear objective that addresses a testable research question(s) (brief or other article types: is there a clear objective)?
Yes - there is a clear objective

**DESIGN** - Is the current approach (including controls and analysis protocols) appropriate for the objective?
Not sure - key details are missing from the manuscript

**EXECUTION** - Are the experiments and analyses performed with technical rigor to allow confidence in the results?
Not sure - key details are missing from the manuscript

**Statistics** - Is the use of statistics in the manuscript appropriate?
Yes - appropriate statistical analyses have been used in the study

**INTERPRETATION** - Is the current interpretation/discussion of the results reasonable and not overstated?
No - there are minor issues

**OVERALL MANUSCRIPT POTENTIAL** - Is the current version of this work technically sound? If not, can revisions be made to make the work technically sound?
Probably - with minor revisions

**PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:**

**GENERAL COMMENTS:** The manuscript is a well-done analysis of an intervention to improve uptake of prenatal care in Malawi. The authors use a synthetic control population. Overall, it seems like a good paper but clarification is needed in a few areas.

**REQUESTED REVISIONS:**
Two issues are not clear: 1, how clustering was handled in the analysis, and 2, how the additional resources provided to the area might have had an effect independent of CHWs.

**ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:**
PNC is often used as an abbreviation for prenatal care, which makes it confusing as an abbreviation for postnatal care. Suggest reworking.

Note: This reviewer report can be downloaded - see attached pdf file.

**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.

No

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

No

**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:

Acceptable

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