Reviewer’s report

Title: Quality of care for children with severe disease in Congo, DRC

Version: 0 Date: 18 Jun 2019

Reviewer: Jamie Murdoch

Reviewer's report:

This is a well-written manuscript that forms a body of work that has looked at nurse’s adherence to IMCI guidelines in LMICs. I think it is suitable for publication with minor amendments.

My main comment relates to the lack of detail of the DRC healthcare system that might provide some insight into the findings. Much of the information in the setting section should be moved to the introduction and the authors could expand on the contextual issues in the DRC that are likely to shape nurse’s performance. The analysis attempted to identify factors associated with higher adherence to the guidelines but these are generic factors which apply to any country and healthcare system. As the authors acknowledge in the discussion, it is difficult to know how to improve adherence to IMCI and they recognise the limitations of focusing solely on further training. Whilst I do not think the authors can address this for the purposes of this publication I think it is worth discussing that unless we situate observational data of this kind within specific socio-historical frameworks, that are systematically investigated as part of the research, we will continue to isolate nurse performance from the contextual conditions that constrain or enable that performance to take place.

I was interested in how the team used tablets to collect disease information. I would like to read more on what data was collected and how that was captured. What format was the data (i.e. freetext, tickboxes etc) and was it recorded using an App or other means? Were questions asked recorded verbatim and if so, how was this done? How was information recorded by providers obtained? Was this via IMCI checklists?

Did you conduct an inter-rater reliability check your classification of cases? If not then how do we know your classifications are reliable?
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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.

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 recommend additional statistical review

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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