Reviewer's report

Title: Management of abortion complications at a rural hospital in Uganda: A quality assessment by criterion-based audit

Version: 1 Date: 9 February 2015

Reviewer: Mandira Paul

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory
The manuscript is poorly structured, sloppy written and with little scientific value in the current format.

The introduction does not cover the scope of the study, it uses old references and fails to provide the reader with essential information to internalise the findings.

There is very little written about misoprostol in the introduction. Ignoring misoprostol as an essential part of PAC is very problematic.

The aim is poorly stated and followed by a confusing explanation of the methods used. It is more a justification of the choice of method than an aim of a study.

The methodology should be introduced in the introduction, not in the aim and not in the methods.

Methods
Needs subheadings, it is incredibly poor structured and difficult to follow. Look at similar papers and try to structure accordingly to help the reader.

It does not convince me of the soundness of the methodology.

Was there any kind of power calculation of how much sample would be needed to present sound data?

Why were there time constraints? Was the study not planned?

The authors claim to have made CBA while in fact they have only completed half the method, this is mentioned but conclusions are drawn as if the whole CBA was conducted and hence the study is presented as if data was more sound than it actually is.

Results
Need structuring, do not present irrelevant data such as percentages for one or two women.

Data is poor.
If this data could be combined with qualitative interview of quality PAC it would be of greater interest. Currently, I am unsure of its contribution. It could potentially serve as a pilot study or a brief commentary on methodology of CBA in a low-resource setting.

Discussion
Mainly a long list of limitations which makes me wonder why you carried out the study in the first place.
The following discussion of results is not interesting nor scientifically relevant and poorly written.

Conclusion needs to be tightened.

Minor Compulsory
The Abstract needs tightening, consider removing the decimals in the %’s. The conclusion contains results.

The first sentence in the introduction is strange: complications to abortion is the second most important cause - what is an important cause? Also, there are more recent estimates available.

The definition of unsafe abortions have been updated with a comment (WHO 2014), it may be interesting to consider.

Is reference 11 correct on line 71?

The inclusion criteria are referred to before they are explained in the results section (line 100)

Who carried out the vaginal examination (line 111).

On line 249 you mention that ultrasound is the golden standard, which is true to a certain extent however there is enough litterature that establishes the accurateness of bimanual examination combined with LMP to determine gestational length, this statement is old fashioned.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests