Reviewer's report

Title: Perception of health care providers and patients on quality of care in maternal and newborn health in fourteen government health facilities of Bangladesh - a mixed method study

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Reviewer: Soumya Alva

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

This paper focuses on the quality of care in 14 government facilities in two districts in Bangladesh using a mixed method approach. It uses qualitative data from in-depth interviews with selected clinical and non-clinical staff, providing their perspective on problem areas resulting in poor service delivery and the quality of care provided. These data are supplemented with patient information on satisfaction. With the focus on MDGs 4 and 5, this topic is of considerable interest to bringing about declines in maternal and child mortality and improvements in health in general. Listed below are comments that will help strengthen this research paper.

Background section:

- While interesting data on shortcomings of the health system in the areas of shortage of manpower, workload and overcrowding, inadequate logistics and laboratory support, under use of patient management protocols, lack of training and insufficient supervision are presented as influencing quality of care, quality of care could be better defined in the background section and the specific domains under which quality of care is determined could be better explained based on current literature.

Methods and results section:

- With data on different levels of facilities being presented, it would be useful to provide more information on government or other norms regarding manpower, training, protocols etc. for the different levels of facilities included in this study so that they can be compared to their current situation. The presentation of results treats all the facilities similarly.

Results section:

- While provider perceptions of these areas are highlighted, it would be useful to qualify the statements by supplementing them with any available facility level data in the same areas. This would make the results even stronger. For example, are there facility level data on staffing, availability of protocols, training, lab support etc.?

- Given that there are two districts, one high performing and one low performing, the differences in findings between the two districts are not highlighted. Despite
similar problem areas in quality of care in both districts, it appears that the outcomes are very different. This is not very clear.

- The authors may want to consider combining the results based on the perceptions of support staff (in depth interviews) and the earlier section highlighting perceptions of health care providers (group discussions) as they cover the same topics and are along the same lines.

- It is useful to obtain information on patient satisfaction. However, in this case as well given the likely difference in outcomes in the two districts, differentiation in patient satisfaction by districts would be useful in Table 3.

- Five areas of patient satisfaction have been identified. Some basis for the selection of these areas would be useful – how were they selected? Also, were these questions asked as general yes/no questions? Or did patients rate their level of satisfaction based on a Likert scale or rating, which would be very useful information to have. A general yes/no question masks the extent of satisfaction in each area and to what extent each area matters.

- Please check that the references are specified according to journal guidelines. Some of the references need to be expanded. Example 5,6 and others. Some only have a weblink but no titles or years.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.