Author's response to reviews

Title: Haiti and the health marketplace: The role of the private, informal market in filling the gaps left by the state

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Dear Editor

Thank you for the reviewer’s comments and opportunity to outline the ethical approval process in relation to the manuscript Haïti and the health marketplace: The role of the private, informal market in filling the gaps left by the state which we believe was very stringent. The proposal was submitted to the highest level of research ethics approval within the University of Queensland. The Medical Research Ethical Review Committee covers research involving clinical cases, treatment or invasive procedures, but health systems and policy research is normally handled through the Behavioural and Social Sciences Ethical Review Committee. The application form with its detailed rationale for verbal consent (and attached information sheet, and question and theme guides) is attached (on the upload page), together with approval and follow up notifications. As the approval covered six countries, the information sheet is in English. We agree retrospectively that there would have been some advantage in also translating into French, but at the time, given the seniority of our informants, we expected that they would be competent in both English and French. This was the case, with the exception of the Cuban Brigade informants, who preferred Spanish. Clarification of the information and the interviews themselves were conducted in the language preferred by interviewees.

A copy of the proposal was given to the Minister of Health, whose business card is attached.

We note different forms of citation, and have used the system that we indicated to informants that we would use, providing minimal data to ensure confidentiality, while conveying a sense of positioning.

We have added the abstract and title page.

We feel the paper fills a critical gap in our understanding of health systems in fragile states and fits the interest of you readership. All authors have contributed
to and read the paper. It has not been submitted elsewhere.

Yours sincerely

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