Reviewer’s report

Title: The quality of medical death certification of cause of death in hospitals in rural Bangladesh: impact of introducing the International form of Medical Certificate of Cause of Death

Version: 0 Date: 22 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Katrina Spilsbury

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript was well written, succinct and represents an important contribution to public health and health services research. The methodology was sound and well described. The findings were interpreted logically and highlight a significant issue of poor death certification.

My suggested minor revisions and queries are below:

* Line 257: Why were the 3 cases omitted?

* Line 289: It is stated that "injuries were omitted from the analysis because nearly all injuries were assumed to be accidents because accident related detail information was not recorded." What exactly does this mean? Where the certificates excluded from the 4914 cases? Which analysis were they excluded from? Injuries appear in Tables 6 and 7 so how can they have been excluded? Clarification needed.

* Table 1: The cells referring to Injuries and poisonings and Neoplasms need more clarification as to what the errors were. Were they likely to be missing or miscoded? Not quite enough detail to describe the actual error is provided.

* It was noted that there was quite a bit of repetition of values that are reported in the tables also being reported in the results section. These could be removed and the reader simply directed to the correct table.

* Line 306 in the Discussion section referred to "However, adult deaths had a relatively large proportion of deaths that were "impossible to specify" (3.1%) and child deaths had a large proportion of deaths due to sepsis (10.4%)." Yet this was not mentioned at all in the results section. This sentence should be removed to results section and then just discussed in the discussion.

* Line 349 of the discussion refers to "It was found that hospital physicians failed to adhere to the MCCD criteria until a departmental head emphasized the guidelines." This is not mentioned in the Methods section or the Results section so how could the authors know this?
Was it measured at all hospital sites? Did the authors do a before/after analysis to know this? Or should this be referenced to another study?

**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.

Yes

**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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Acceptable

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