Reviewer's report

Title: Health services in Trinidad: throughput, throughput challenges, and the impact of a throughput intervention on overcrowding in a public health institution

Version: 0 Date: 07 Jul 2017

Reviewer: Jacob Novignon

Reviewer's report:
The authors sought to assess efficiency in a public hospital in the Caribbean. Having read the manuscript carefully, I suggest the following major revisions to the paper.

1. The general conception of efficiency in this paper needs to be reconsidered. Primary focus of the paper was on efficiency, however, it is difficult to understand exactly how efficiency in a single facility was measured. In fact there was no efficiency measurement in the entire paper and the results on efficiency were simply speculative and based on value judgement. For instance, concluding that customers' complains, overcrowding, long waiting time indicate inefficiency is quite difficult to accept. These may simply be due to lack of facilities and personnel in the facility. Also if drugs were not dispensed from the pharmacy, how does that show inefficiency? Several other conclusions made all over the paper should be reviewed. To be clear, I suggest you remove the whole concept of efficiency from the paper and focus on describing challenges in the facility.

2. The paper only used a single facility and makes conclusions about the entire health system. How is this possible? To what extent can we generalize these descriptive findings?

3. The intervention as described in the methods section is very difficult to understand. Was there a control group in the evaluation of the intervention? What was the setting of the control group? What were the objectives of the interventions? What were the outcomes of focus? what were the pathways through which the intervention was expected to impact the
4. Which of the authors championed the intervention as claimed on line 202?

5. You mentioned data was collected from several sources including MOH, WHO etc. It’s not clear how these data were used and which objectives were achieved with these data. In fact in the results section there is no trace of findings from these data.

6. Your abstract does not completely reflect your work. The first two methods mentioned in the methods section are nowhere to be found.

7. Was there ethical clearance for this study?

In general, I believe the entire paper needs complete revision and change of focus (including the title, which is not so clear at the moment).

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.
No

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.
No

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 am able to assess the statistics
Quality of written English

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:
Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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