Reviewer’s report

Title: Evaluating Medicine Prices, Availability, and Affordability in Bangladesh Using World Health Organization and Health Action International Methodology

Version: 0 Date: 09 Oct 2018

Reviewer: Paul Grootendorst

Reviewer's report:

This was a very well conducted and thorough analysis of data obtained from a survey of medicines prices and availability in Bangladesh. The present study is a timely update and extension of work that was conducted over 10 years ago. This kind of work is exactly what is needed to advance the objectives of the global health movement: one needs to assess financial barriers to needed health services and pharmaceuticals in resource poor jurisdictions. The present paper presents price, availability and affordability statistics obtained from careful price measurements from a variety of different sectors (the public sector providers, which the poor typically rely on) and private providers (which tend to cater to the more affluent) for different classes of medicines. I quite enjoyed reading it.

I did however have some constructive criticism to provide. The first concerns the authors' policy recommendations "Availability and affordability of NCD medicines are key concerns where the burden of NCD is rising. … A small number of medicines are consistently expensive across sectors in Bangladesh, suggesting the need for strategies to control prices for certain medicines."

I caution that price controls in some circumstances will lead to shortages - this would occur if providers no longer think that it is worthwhile (profitable) to supply the product.

The second comment relates to the regression analyses. It would be helpful to report the total sample size and also provide a bit of explanation as to the estimator of the variance (or standard error) of the OLS parameter estimator. This was not provided and my sense is that this was the standard variance estimator which assumes iid errors. The price outcomes data might very well be heteroskedastic in which case a robust standard error estimator may be preferred.

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.

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:

Acceptable

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