Reviewer's report

Title: What is the working situation and satisfaction of medical staff in pilot county hospitals and their understanding and perception of the reform: A study of public hospital reform in Hubei province of China

Version: 5 Date: 8 April 2014

Reviewer: Edson Araujo

Reviewer's report:

The paper has improved considerably, there still some issues to be clarified (some remain from previous round of comments):

Major:

- As noted before, page 5 refers to studies already conducted. From this version we know there are “few”, but would be good to cite them and, more important, to know how this paper add from the previous ones;

- Page 8, first paragraph: please note the outcome of interest in the logistic regression should be 1 “satisfied” (very satisfied, satisfied, moderate) and 0 “otherwise” (dissatisfied, very dissatisfied);

- I didn’t find an explanation on how place of work was controlled in the regression analysis, different regressions, dummy (not in tables 4 and 5);

- In relation to salary levels: is it possible to have the actual figures to compare China with international situation and within country hospitals? If salary levels are basically the same one would assume that dissatisfaction with salary is widely issue for medical staff in Chinese hospitals, is that true? It would be good to have few words on this;

- Conclusions: the first paragraph needs editing: for instance the text did not identified which group in the analysis is the “non-county hospitals” (see below):

  “The medical staff members in pilot county hospitals were exposed to work stress at a higher extent but exhibited more satisfaction on current job, performance appraisal system, concern showed by leaders, hospital management, and compensation packages than those in pilot county hospitals.”

- The suggestions for improvements seem quite general: “demand of medical staff” (which ones, anything particularly important was identified?); “arrange human resources” (sounds too general); “reduce…work stress appropriately” (how?) and “improve their income reasonably” (for how much?). I wonder if there is anything on the data, or from the international experience, that can inform policy makers in China on how to achieve these objectives;

- The above can be said for the suggestions to improve “understanding and
perception of the reform”, the proposal sounds too general (not specific interventions).

Minor:
- Abstract: the “conclusion” part needs to be re-written, particularly the last sentence;
- Page 5, last paragraph: it needs some editing, for instance the sentence starting with “furthermore, this study…” needs to be re-written;
- When authors refer to “working situation” I understand this means working conditions, could be more explicit on what this means and how was measured?

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: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
no competing interest.