Reviewer's report

Title: Posting and Transfer: key to restoring trust in government health services

Version: 1 Date: 10 May 2015

Reviewer: Tim Martineau

Reviewer's report:

The type of article for this submission was not indicated, but I have assumed that by its nature and length that it was submitted as a commentary. I have therefore followed the guidelines for this type of article when carrying out my review.

General comment:

This is an important and neglected area of research, so the topic is very appropriate for this journal.

According to the journal guidelines, the paper should follow the structure of Background, Main text and Conclusion - but I will leave it to the journal editors to decide on this, as the structure of the current submission works for me.

• Minor Compulsory Revisions

1. The argument for more research on posting and transfer is that current practices directly or indirectly undermine the trust of the public in health services.

This argument is made reasonably clearly, with the exception of paragraphs four and five. The authors seem to be trying to include too many concepts (absenteeism, quality of services, management, gender, behaviour of health workers to the public, etc).

Either the argument in these two paragraphs needs to simplified to make the point about mistrust by community more central, or the authors could simply the argument to: UHC needs more and equitably distributed and appropriately qualified health workers (in order to improve health outcomes); an important human resource management function to achieve this is posting and transfer; then on from paragraph 6. If the argument is simplified to one focussing on HRM (which is fine for the readership of this journal as opposed to more general health journals), then the concepts of trust in title and concluding paragraph will need to be modified.

2. The concept of 'tacit ecology or knowledge' needs further explanation.

3. The fact that posting and transfer in the health sector is usually governed by government-wide public administration systems needs to be made more explicit. This will strengthen the statement about the need to political commitment in the final paragraph.
4. The two sentences beginning: "Where health workers are posted ..."; and "To call attention to ..." to not read easily and should be edited for improved clarity.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests