Reviewer’s report

Title: Physicians’ perceptions on the impact of telemedicine on recruitment and retention in underserved areas: a descriptive study in Senegal

Version: 0 Date: 15 Mar 2017

Reviewer: Ana Paula Cavalcante de Oliveira

Reviewer's report:

I would like to congratulate the authors for their findings in this manuscript and for the relevance of the topic in this field. I recommend minor revisions.

1) It would be a plus if more information could be added to the text:
   
a) The research general objective;

b) If the telemedicine was implemented in the country as a government intervention or as isolated initiatives;

c) If the respondents have had previous experiences with telemedicine;

d) The interviewed physicians who work in Dakar have had experience working outside of Dakar (in underserved areas);

e) How was the list of possible interviewees identified? National database, ministry of health…

f) Is there a reason why the number of selected physicians working in public hospitals (5%) is higher than the physicians working in district health centres (16%)?

g) the sequence in which the recruitment and retention factors mentioned by the participants are presented in the text should respect an order (such as importance or alphabetical…).

Also, some specific points could be reviewed
2) Page 5 of 28, line 24 - A keyword could be included to represent retention (e.g. recruitment and retention) and others (e.g. rural and remote areas; health services accessibility).

3) Page 8 of 28, line 7 - "In Senegal, physicians are more numerous in Dakar, the national capital, than in other regions (1)". A ratio or a number to support this affirmation should be included.

4) Page 8 of 28, line 17 - "Despite these measures, the uneven distribution of physicians has worsened" a reference should be included to support this affirmation.

5) Page 8 of 28, line 31- "Duplantie and colleagues demonstrated that telemedicine could have a positive impact on the individual, professional, organizational and educational factors that determine physicians' recruitment to and retention in underserved areas (5) Why was the impact positive? You should give examples.

6) Page 9 of 28, line 14 - "We used random sampling to purposive select 30 physicians among the 596 physicians working in public hospitals and 30 physicians among the 187 working in district health centres." It would be a plus if the number of physicians working in public hospitals and in district health centres be divided into physicians in Dakar and outside of Dakar (if possible by regions).

7) Page 18 of 28, line 36 - "The environmental factors that were mentioned by our participants are poor living conditions and the limited number of patients in underserved areas" - It is missing information about "the bad climatic conditions (n=2)".

8) Page 19 of 28, line 4 - "The professional factors that were reported in this study are the lack of career advancement and professional development." This information differs from the results section "Professional factors highlighted by participants included the lack of professional development (n=2) and professional isolation (n=3)."

9) Page 20 of 28, line 9 - "Finally, the identified economic factors inhibiting to underserved areas are low income and lack of incentives." It is missing information about "the lack of remoteness premium (n=11)" presented in the results section.

10) Page 20 of 28, line 38 - "To address these factors, telemedicine should be paired up with other solutions." Instead of solutions, measures/interventions/initiatives should be used.
11) Page 20 of 28, line 46 - "Telemedicine is not the only factor that determines physicians' recruitment to and retention in underserved areas, and identified those that our respondents considered to be among the most important ones." It is necessary to verify this sentence.

12) Page 21 of 28, line 9 - "n: Nombre de participants" - should the word be Number instead?

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