Reviewer’s report

Title: The role and scope of practice of midwives in humanitarian settings: a systematic review and content analysis

Version: 0 Date: 19 Jun 2018

Reviewer: Jonathan L Ajah

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"The role and scope of practice of midwives in humanitarian settings; a systematic review and content analysis"

Kristen Beek, Alison McFadden, Angela Dawson

Summary

This systematic review and content analysis tries to harmonize evidence around the way midwives practice in humanitarian settings as against their practice in civilian settings. I must commend the authors for thinking outside the box and trying to create usable evidence base for the gap they have identified, however I find their systematic review rather weak in a number of key areas which I will enumerate in the following paragraphs.

Major essential revisions

The research question the systematic review tries to answer has some key weakness;

What the authors seem to be answering is; the role of midwives in task-shifting sexual and reproductive health services in humanitarian settings. It is widely agreed by WHO, ICM and experts that midwives have specific job roles based on active competence. Expanding that in humanitarian settings is largely task-shifting

Their review tries to garner usable evidence to support or advocate choosing midwives over all other health care professionals to play a more generalist role in the provision of sexual and reproductive health in humanitarian settings… and their paper tried to justify it using experiences from adhoc field practices rather than a review of the typical range of active practice competencies of midwives.
Minor essential revision

The methodology needs to elaborate more on:

Search strategy, so that the reader of the paper can repeat the search and get similar or same results

Reasons for sticking to 4 databases and 32 organizations

No study from Europe was included in the review?

The statement on 76 about midwives is factually ambiguous (correct and incorrect)

131...Key standard definitions of terms needs to be included in the text

Discretionary revisions

The research benefited from a grant, it may be helpful to see the public terms and conditions of the grant, to rule out funding bias

Recommendations

I think the paper answers a novel question relevant to the aim and scope of BMC HRH but may merit publication only after major revision

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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