Author’s response to reviews

Title: A scoping review on Family Medicine in sub-Saharan Africa: Definition, practice and positioning in African health care systems

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Author’s response to reviews:

Page: 39

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Abstract/Background: Did you really make a distinction between effectiveness and impact in the review?

It has been difficult to fully differentiate between effectiveness and impact in the evidence we found.

Abstract/Background: say “effectiveness and impact, in order to identify...”

done

Abstract/Methods: say “conducted by systematically”

done

Abstract/Methods: say “from 2000 onwards and in English language, were included.”
Abstract/Methods: in my view the Primafamed network should have no hyphen and no capital N for network. Note throughout.

Changed throughout the article.

Abstract/Methods: Add comma “Gauteng, 2018”

done

Abstract/Results: What “needs” are referred to? How does this differ from “local situation”?

rephrased

Abstract/Results: “This is in contrast..” This sentence is not a finding, this is discussion. Delete sentence

done

Abstract/Results: Suggest replacing with “Most FPs were deployed in district hospitals and levels of the health system, other than primary care.”

done

Abstract/conclusions: rephrase as “FM is a developing discipline in SSA.”

done

Page: 40 Background:

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Grammar: Add comma “focused on primary health care (PHC), which provides care…”

done

Rephrase “no-one behind in pursuing the”
done

Grammar: Don't start a sentence with and.
changed

Rephrase “in SSA this is primarily”
done

Rephrase “(secondary/ tertiary) and are often based in”
done

Comment: Isn't “skills mix” usually used to refer to skills in a mix of different health workers. Maybe competencies is a better word?
Agreed and changed

Comment: FPs have clinical leadership role in all teams, including the DH, not just PHC. Should this sentence be part of the preceding paragraph.
changed

Rephrase: “The development of the discipline was strengthened by…”
done

Rephrase: “At a global level there is evidence that FM is cost-effective and delivers good health outcomes,...”
done
Remove "in SSA" at end of sentence – repetition

done

Rephrase “This scoping review started by looking…”

done

Rephrase: “to provide an overview of existing evidence of…”

done

Rephrase: “of a research strategy to provide additional evidence”

done

Rephrase: “at the time of this review”

done

Rephrase: “SSA was published.”

done

Methods:

- Correct: “The scoping review was conducted…”

changed

Rephrase: “subject heading (MeSH) terms”

done

Rephrase: “final list of selected articles”
Comment: "The first author combined...excluded" this seems to be belong earlier in the description between "...articles". and "A total of 103..."

Taken out

Comment: "Key findings of these...Ariadne Labs." This seems to repeat what is also said in the section below. Does it belong there?

Rephrased.

Comment: Limitations of the methods are usually discussed in the discussion.

To make sure the reader understands the limitations related to the methods we used before starting to read the findings we decided to place it in this part of the document. This is an accepted way. Here we describe limitations related to the actual plan of methods. Limitations related to the real search and the real scoping review will be discussed in discussion.

Page 44

Rephrase: “find value in FM, other stakeholders (Textbox 7) have different perspectives on the discipline.(4)”

done
Comment: "communicator, collaborator, consultant" This does not quite make sense. Are you saying they are an intermediary between non-physician primary care providers and hospital specialists?

rephrased

Apostrophe: “The FP's niche...”

done

Comment: "the setting and the needs" whose or what needs does this refer to?

rephrased

Page 46
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Rephrase: “need to have additional training”

done

Rephrase: “in surgery, otolaryngology...”

done

Rephrase: “The practice of FM varies from country to country,”

done

Rephrase: “country's health system”

done

Rephrase: “: socially accountable…”

done
Rephrase: “, adaptation to existing health care system”
done

Rephrase: “and ongoing development of the competencies”
done

Author: rm Subject: Inserted Text Date: 2019/10/17 16:23:41
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Discussion:
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Rephrase: “to the existing health care system”
done

Page: 47
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Grammar: “that is fluid, adjusting”
done

Comment: Sentence beginning "the dichotomy..." -meaning unclear
Rephrased

Rephrase: “their context.(50)”
done

Rephrase: “the majority of which...”
Comment: "Increased financial resources..." sentence incomplete

rephrased

Rephrase: “Such insights also led to a better understanding...”

done

Rephrase: “fewer findings were...”

done

Page: 48

- Rephrase: “Although the Lancet argued that FM is "so integral to the path towards the SDGs that reference [to it] in a goal or target would undermine its cross-cutting role", more evidence is still crucial.”

done

Grammar:

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Conclusions:

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Rephrase: “In most settings, FPs are placed...”

done

Rephrase: “FPs are placed in district hospitals and work from there with PHC teams.”
Rephrase: “forefront, to reach UHC...”
done

Rephrase: “forefront, to reach UHC...”
done

Spelling: Saharan
done

Page: 57
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Table 1: text says either criteria 4 or 5, which is not quite the same as both being optional? – correct.
Adjusted in the text.

Table 1: Implementation: what is meant by the word organization here?
Taken out

Table 1: Spelling – Saharan
changed

Table 1: Comment: In the article effectiveness and impact are seen as separate outcomes, while here impact is seen as synonymous with effectiveness?
adjusted

Page: 58
Table 2: SA: Column4: Correct: “At all levels of care; in primary, secondary and tertiary care setting. The FP functions at the district level, in district clinical specialist teams, at district hospitals and in health centres or sub-districts with multiple clinics. In rural as well as urban areas.”

We clarified that the private practice is in non-public institutions.

Table 2: NB SA now has 9 training programmes in country – SA added

Table 2: Nigeria: Column1: Rephrase: “entered the Nigerian” changed

Table 2: Nigeria: Column4: Rephrase “universities” – not the staff. changed

Table 2: now 5 training programmes in country – Kenya” added

Table 2: Botswana: Column3: “Generalist doctors who can function within primary hospitals and added

Page: 70

- Figure 2: when you use abbreviations should you use the proper abbreviation for the journal?

All written out in full
Figure 5: This role of capacity builder would also be seen as applying to DH team

No changes made as the figure is copied from a source and not adjusted.