Reviewer’s report

Title: Collecting verbal autopsies: improving and streamlining data collection processes using electronic tablets

Version: 0 Date: 02 Oct 2017

Reviewer: Peter Byass

Reviewer's report:

This paper covers an important and interesting operational issue - getting verbal autopsy procedures into wider and more convenient usage in countries where most deaths are not routinely certified.

It is essentially operational research, describing pilot studies in Bangladesh and the Philippines. Even though it may not be ground-breaking science, it is important to document these experiences in the scientific record for the sake of many potential groups who may wish to implement similar VA processes in other settings.

This author group has been closely involved in the development of the new WHO-2016 international verbal autopsy standard, of which the PHMRC questionnaire described here and the associated on-line resources implement subsets of questions and cause of death categories. It would be worth briefly locating this work in the context of the WHO-2016 standard to aid the understanding of potential VA users.

Minor points

"complimentary methods" should be "complementary methods"

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