Reviewer’s report

Title: National Health Insurance Accreditation pattern among private healthcare providers in Ghana

Version: 1 Date: 05 Mar 2017

Reviewer: Jose Manuel Freire

Reviewer's report:

1. General comment.

The objective of the paper is clearly defined, the methodology used, the data gathered and their analysis suit well the purpose of the paper; the discussion deals with all relevant issues and the conclusions presented are the logic ones.

The paper is a case-study of an important topic in healthcare policy, quite relevant in the strategies towards Universal Health Coverage. This Ghana's NHIA case-study may bear significant lessons for other low middle income countries facing similar situations.

2. Suggestion for a possible additional analysis by type providers.

Please, consider if an analysis by ownership type (profit/nonprofit) of the providers, in addition the ones by region, level of care and grade, may add any interesting insight to the paper.

3. Issues which would benefit of further clarification/discussion in the paper:

a. One issue that deserves further clarification for the reader is the role of the HEFRA (Health Facility Regulatory Agency) in relation to the accreditation process carried out by the NHIA (National Health Insurance Authority). [page 3, 2nd paragraph].

b. Conflict of roles. The NHIA is both the accreditation agency and the purchaser of services to the provider it has accredited; this situation points out to a potential conflict of interest between both roles: the objectivity of keeping standards, may conflict with the need of securing access to the insurers in a given region or area, even with substandard providers, if needed.

c. Fraud in the accreditation process. The 2nd paragraph briefly touches the issue of possible fraud in the accreditation system. Are there any measures in place to discover and counter fraud?
d. The role of public providers. Acknowledging that public providers are not within the scope of the paper, however their role in securing access shouldn't be totally absent in the discussion if the reader is to have a more comprehensive picture of the health services provision to the NHIA in Ghana. Are public providers also required to be accredited by NHIA to provide services to its subscribers? Do they perform better than private providers? What if they fail?

3. Minor issues to be corrected before publication.

a. Ref. #12. The NHIA web page doesn't point to the specific topic it's intended to, namely number of accredited facilities.

b. Ref. #9. The link of this reference is broken

c. Table 1. The last column has no title-heading.

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