Reviewer’s report

Title: Assessment of utilization pattern of fixed dose drug combinations in primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare centers in Nepal: A cross-sectional study

Version: 0  Date: 13 Mar 2017

Reviewer: Emanuel Raschi

Reviewer’s report:

The study by Arjun et al. describes utilization patterns of fixed dose drug combinations (FDCs) in primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare centers in Nepal. Overall, the work is well presented and written and may be of interest for the scientific community working on drug utilization research, considering the difficulties in carrying out this type of studies in developing Countries.

However, there are different aspects (listed below) requiring authors' attention:

- It is unclear to non-specialized readers the reason why FDCs are considered inappropriate a priori. Likewise, a low use of essential drugs does not necessarily mean lack of appropriateness, especially in developing Countries. This should be justified and discussed by the authors. In other words, is there a proof (from previous studies) that FDCs are actually unnecessary? In this context, to claim inappropriateness, a clinical diagnosis is needed. I notice that the authors do have this information from the encounter form, but no data are presented. Presentation and discussion of these data would strongly increase the impact of the paper and I encourage the authors to provide and discuss them.

- The study is based on a limited sample of patients interviewed 8 years ago (2009). The authors should comment on this aspect, because it is plausible that current situation is different from the setting data were obtained. This should be considered at least as a limitation and discussed accordingly.

- A number of tables are presented. However, I believe that many of them can be re-arranged or, alternatively, provided as supplementary material to avoid duplication of the information with the text. Accordingly, the results section can be modified by removing some of the headings.

Minor aspects:

- In the abstract, the acronym NPR should be specified.

- In the introduction, the same sentence is repeated twice "The FDC may not contain the necessary quantity of each drug, and the combination may not be synergistic".

- In the methods section, a reference should be provided for the INRUD form.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

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

Acceptable

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