

Reviewer's report

Title: A systematic review of task-shifting for HIV treatment and care in Africa

Version: 1 **Date:** 9 September 2009

Reviewer: Francoise Barten

Reviewer's report:

Thanks for inviting me to review this manuscript. I have read it with great interest.

1. Does it address an important or timely issue? THE CONCEPT AND PRACTICE OF TASK SHIFTING HAS ACQUIRED NEW PROMINENCE AND URGENCY AND THE ARTICLE ADDRESSES AN IMPORTANT ISSUE.

2. Is it well reasoned? YES.

3. Is it relatively balanced, or does it make plain where the author's opinions might not represent the field as a whole? I MISSED THE REFERENCE TO THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND THE NEED TO RE-VISIT THIS. SEE RECENT ARTICLE BY

Lehmann, U., Van Damme, W., Barten, F., Sanders, D. (2009). Task shifting: the answer to the human resources crisis in Africa? *Human Resources for Health* 2009, 7:49doi:10.1186/1478-4491-7-49

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IT WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO DISCUSS WHETHER TASK SHIFTING AND INCREASED COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION CAN BE MORE THAN A SHORT-TERM SOLUTION TO ADDRESS THE HIV/AIDS CRISIS AND CAN CONTRIBUTE TO A REVIVAL OF THE PRIMARY HEALTH CARE APPROACH AS AN ANSWER TO HEALTH SYSTEMS CRISES.

4. Is the standard of writing acceptable? YES

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- Major Compulsory Revisions

The author must respond to these before a decision on publication can be reached.

IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO PROVIDE SOME MORE CONTEXT TO THE DEBATE. E.G. THE RECENT LANCET SERIES ON SOUTH AFRICA UNDERLINE THE NEED TO DO THIS IN PARTICULAR IN A CONTEXT OF INCREASING HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND GEOGRAPHICAL INEQUITIES IN TERMS OF HEALTH SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I DECLARE THAT I HAVE NO COMPETING INTERESTS.