Reviewer's report

**Title:** Absenteeism amongst health workers - developing a typology to support empiric work in low-income countries and characterizing reported causes.

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 2 February 2013

**Reviewer:** Jean M Moore

**Reviewer's report:**

Major Compulsory Revision
First, let me say that I think this is an extremely important topic and I am impressed with the approach used to develop the typology. However, I am struggling to fully understand the typological framework as presented. While I think all 3 categories are clearly defined and seem fairly straightforward, I find some of their intersections very confusing. For example, the illustration for unplanned, unsanctioned and involuntary is not very clear and apparently no examples were found in the literature review.

Given the importance of this topic, I am wondering whether it is possible to either fully clarify the intersections of the categories or consider simplifying it.

Also, I was struck by your indepth discussion of the factors that contribute to absenteeism and the factors seem to fall into 1 of 2 categories - personal and work related. Is it possible to build something like this into the framework?

The goal of the framework is to help providers to better understand and manage absenteeism. Consequently, keeping it simple, straightforward and useful would be a very important accomplishment.

**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