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Dr. James Buchan, Editor-in-Chief

Dear Dr. Buchan,

On behalf of my coauthor and myself, I am pleased to submit our original research article titled, “Informal payments for modern family planning methods at public facilities in Tanzania: room for improvement.” In many settings, cost is a known barrier to family planning use. Tanzanian policy stipulates that family planning methods and services should be provided for free at public facilities, yet publicly available, nationally representative data have not been used to measure adherence to this policy. To fill this gap, our study uses Demographic Health Survey Data from the 2015-2016 Tanzania survey to investigate whether informal payments for family planning have been effectively eliminated by this policy.

While the majority of women reported receiving their current modern family planning method for free at public sector facilities, one in six women reported informal payments. This proportion varied meaningfully by facility and method type. For example, one in four women who sought an injectable from a government dispensary reported informal payments. Importantly, injectables were the method most commonly used by women in the lowest wealth quintiles, which they most frequently obtained at government dispensaries. The new insights generated by this study can be used to direct the efforts of program managers toward ensuring compliance with existing policies, especially at government dispensaries.

This submission has not been previously published and it is not under consideration at another journal. All authors of this manuscript have directly participated in the study’s design, execution, or analysis. All authors of this manuscript also have participated in the writing of the manuscript, and have read and approved the final version being submitted to Human Resources for Health. The authors of this manuscript have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this manuscript. We look forward to receiving suggestions from the reviewers.

Sincerely,

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