Title: Medical ethics in times of conflict: Why silence is not an option

Review comments:

This is a valuable commentary, but it does require a bit more work.

1) The reference to the Hippocratic Oath seems too simplistic, given the significant and persuasive concerns that have been raised about it by several authors from Bob Veatch to Edmund Pellegrino.

2) The authors argue - rightly - against medical neutrality. Among others they argue 'But it also looks inward, toward health professionals, seeking to ensure that they set aside their personal – non-medical – beliefs and opinions in order to focus exclusively on the health needs of patients.' I am under the impression that the authors are sympathetic to this stance, in which case there seems to be some inconsistency with the BMA's full-throated support for the accommodation of conscientiously objecting doctors.

3) Finally, the penultimate section (just before the Conclusion) is full of empirical claims of this sort: 'Vocal medical comment on the health impacts of conflict of violence is a far better guarantee of the independence of the profession – and of the wellbeing of patients – than an imposed or self-imposed silence.' The authors may be correct but to sustain a policy prescription, it needs *evidence* to support the claim made in this section.