Reviewer's report

Title: The Effects of Patient Characteristics on ADHD Diagnosis and Treatment: A Factorial Study of Family Physicians

Version: 1 Date: 28 January 2010

Reviewer: Helen Schneider

Reviewer's report:

This study presents an innovative way of assessing how social factors may influence ADHD diagnosis and treatment. Randomized patient characteristics present a new and clever way of assessing physicians' decisions regarding ADHD diagnosis and treatment.

My suggestions are below.

(1) Table 4 includes patient characteristics as independent variables but ignores physician characteristics. Are physicians who practice in urban settings more likely to diagnose a patient with ADHD? We also know that there are significant regional differences in ADHD diagnosis and treatment. Since physician’s state is known regional differences can be estimated.

(2) The study dedicates much discussion to variables of patient’s race and insurance status as well as interaction between these two variables. However, I feel that physician’s race and interaction between physician’s race and patient's race can play a role here.

(3) Finally, younger physicians may have a more recent medical training and may have diagnosis patterns that are different from those of older physicians. I believe that this variable (years in practice) should be included in Table 4.

Overall, a very interesting study.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.