Reviewer’s report

**Title:** The association between demographic factors, health service factors and user satisfaction: results from a study from three casualty clinics in Norway

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 9 May 2010

**Reviewer:** Alicia O’Cathain

**Reviewer’s report:**

You say in the background that case mix adjustment is needed when comparing quality scores of services and therefore we need to know more about what to adjust for. I think this is right and your paper has the potential to help us understand more about this. However I think the paper needs to take a much more indepth approach and that you need to think through the key issues more.

**Major compulsory revisions**

1. The title talks about casualty clinics and the paper about primary care out of hours services. It is worth using consistent language and explaining to international readers what this service is and how it is used in the context of health care in Norway. This will help the reader to understand the description you give on p4.

2. The distinctions made between user satisfaction and experiences and patient reported health care factors are not clear. On a number of readings I think you mean overall satisfaction v satisfaction about different aspects of care. At the moment the paper is confusing and it would help enormously if this was clarified throughout the paper. For example the last paragraph of the background is most unclear.

3. There is a great deal of research on the relationship between demographic and other factors with overall satisfaction. These are covered in Crow et al which you reference. However, the key issues need to summarised in the background for the reader. For example age is the most consistent factor related to satisfaction.

4. In the Methods please describe the questionnaire and how it was developed. There is a paragraph in the discussion which could be moved to the Methods section to do this.

5. To what extent are some of your findings related to low statistical power? These numbers are small e.g. p7

6. The scales are described in a very general way throughout the paper e.g. "satisfaied with doctors and nurses" in the abstract. But satisfied with what about the doctors and nurses? What does 'incorrect treatment' mean on p11? If you give more detail about the meaning of items and scales then I think it will help the
reader to engage more with the paper.

7. The abstract should be rewritten to communicate the key messages. It is weak to say that more research is needed without being clear about your contribution to the literature on this topic.

8. The discussion needs to be longer and much more thorough. Did you find what has been usually found with patient satisfaction and demographic variables? For example that age is related to satisfaction? If not why not? Can you recommend clearly what to case mix adjust for?

9. On reading the discussion you seem to be saying your study was too small to do what you set out to do. So why did you do it?

10. Please give the full questions in table 2.

11. Make it clear how many people are included in each analysis in Table 3. Are there 12 patients with telephone contact and does this explain the large p-values?

Minor essential revisions

1. Please put the number of questionnaires sent in the abstract.

2. Please state the reminder was sent after 6 weeks on p5.

3. Please explain why the reminder was sent after 6 weeks. This is a very long time in survey methodology.

4. Please explain the scoring of items and scales more p5

5. Please explain why the guardian sample is not combined with the patient sample - after all these are all users.

6. Please give the denominator of the response rate on p6

7. The use of language relating to multivariate analysis is confusing in the text e.g. p7 referring to a clinic as a 'reference clinic'. Please describe findings more clearly.

8. If you compare clinics surely you need to adjust for demographic variables?

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests