Reviewer's report

Title: Inequality in provider continuity for children in Australian General Practice

Version: 1 Date: 19 July 2011

Reviewer: Sue Pullon

Reviewer's report:

Overall a good study, clearly reported and with important findings. Some overstatements in the discussion, which can be rectified. This method of assessing continuity of general practitioner care by parental self recall over an 8 year period is innovative and appropriate in the absence of patient registries.

- Major Compulsory Revisions

NONE

- Minor Essential Revisions

1. Not all general practitioners will be listed in the phone book, yet the matching accuracy is derived from this contact detail; can the authors explain how they accounted for long term locum and associate GPs in the matching process?

2. NZ work regarding continuity of care is referred to in the discussion. There are important differences between the Australian and NZ primary health care provision which should be explained before comparisons are made.

Discretionary Revisions

3. The authors describe the study as being one of provider care in general practice – but it is general practitioner care only – rephrase and make distinction between named general practitioners and named general practices clearer.

4. Assumptions are made in the discussion about the desirability of continuity of GP care. Not all respondents will necessarily see GP transience as a disadvantage – the study has not explored parental attitudes to continuity - no such conclusion should be drawn.

5. The study does not account for primary health care provision by health care professionals other than GPs. Clarify this point, give more context for the Australian primary health system for an international audience and acknowledge other primary care providers, who may also provide continuity of care.

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

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'