Author's response to reviews

Title: Inter-contact interval based views on frequent attenders in primary care

Authors:

Johannes Hauswaldt (Johannes.Hauswaldt@med.uni-goettingen.de)
Wolfgang Himmel (whimmel@gwdg.de)
Eva Hummers-Pradier (eva.hummers-pradier@med.uni-goettingen.de)

Version: 2 Date: 4 June 2013

Author's response to reviews:

To the Editorial Board
BMC Family Practice
The Executive Editor
Christopher Foote
BioMed Central
236 Gray's Inn Road
London WC1X 8HB
United Kingdom

Dear Editor,

attached please find a copy of our research paper discussing “Inter-contact interval based views on frequent attenders in primary care”. Please consider this manuscript for peer review and publication in BMC Family Practice.

Frequently attending patients are an important issue not only within the German health care system, where high rates of contact between patients and their GP are observed. In spite of a large international body of research publications, we were not altogether satisfied with existing definitions and descriptions for this group of patients. Therefore we suggest a new measure, the inter-contact interval between two consecutive contacts, as a basic measure for analysis of contact frequency (actually, the idea had been drawn from inter-heartbeat analysis in analogy), and applied it on the existing set of routine data.

As this inter-contact interval approach is retaining more of the original information, does not need arbitrarily chosen relational systems, can be understood easily and is much more convenient in research application, it may be appropriate to present this to primary care researchers from other health care systems, for smooth international comparison.

The following changes have been applied after communication with Arlene Pura, Journal Editorial Office, of 03-June-2013:

(1) Authors' Contribution section placed after Competing Interests section.
(2) The Ethical Approval section re-worded according to requested form.
(3) Additional file # 1 removed.

Yours sincerely
Johannes Hauswaldt