Reviewer’s report

Title: A qualitative study of the impact of the implementation of advanced access in primary healthcare on the working lives of general practice staff

Version: 1 Date: 11 July 2005

Reviewer: Chris J Salisbury

Reviewer’s report:

General

This paper describes an interesting qualitative study. It appears to have been well conducted and provides a good level of detail about the methods used to enhance validity. I have only a few comments below:

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. It is not clear how many receptionists, GPs and managers were invited to participate and how many refused.

2. I think it is unlikely that the receptionists only expressed positive views about advanced access. If they also expressed problems these should be mentioned to ensure balance.

3. At several points in the discussion the authors report respondents perceptions as if they were facts. e.g. fifth line of discussion: "...(patients).. now attend the consultation with fewer but more trivial complaints"

4. It is likely that all these practices were influenced by the same PCT policies, perhaps the same PCT access facilitator, and perhaps by working together in a consortium. this type of area effect further reduces the generalisability of this small study and should be mentioned in the discussion

5. The second half of the middle paragraph on p13 is not very clearly expressed

6. IN the paragraph beginning: the introduction of the philosophy of AA' on page 14, the authors make a series of statements about the claimed advantages of AA. They do not provide any data in this paper to substantiate these claims, nor provide references to other papers which provide evidence. In fact as they conclude later in the article, there is almost no published evidence to substantiate the claims about the benefits of AA. This paragraph needs to be revised.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I am conducting a programme of research into Advanced Access which includes some qualitative work which has some similarities with the work reported here.