Reviewer's report

Title: Out-of-hours demand for GP care and emergency services: patients choices and referrals by general practitioners and ambulance services

Version: 1 Date: 28 February 2007

Reviewer: Caro van Uden

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an interesting paper that contributes to the knowledge on demand for out-of-hours care.

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

none

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

Methods:
1) Please explain already in the methods section why you chose to collect data in two periods (with an interval of five years).
2) In the first sentence of the setting paragraph you mention the city of Ijmuiden. In the supplementary table you mention the city of Velsen. Please correct this. Also mention that this is a city in the Netherlands, for not all readers may know these places.
3) Setting paragraph, line 9: correct: “one nurse who receives, assesses, and manages all….”. Line 10: replace ‘standards’ for ‘guidelines’ Line 11: replace ‘was’ by ‘are’.

Results
1) Page 7, Para 2: How did you retrieve information on (and identify) referred patients that went to other hospitals? Please mention this in the Methods section.

Discussion
1) Page 10, Para 3: motives to integrate services not only depend on demand for out-of-hours care. Other factors such as efficiency, may also play a role.
2) Page 11, last sentence: please delete this sentence, because this conclusion does not follow from the results of the study.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential 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, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

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