Reviewer's report

Title: Is Provider Type Associated with Cancer Screening and Prevention? Advanced Practice Registered Nurses, Physician Assistants, and Physicians.

Version: 2 Date: 13 January 2014

Reviewer: Courtney Lyles

Reviewer's report:

This article by Kepka et al. examines the associations between provider type (PCP, APRN/PA, and other) and receipt of cancer screening and prevention in a nationally representative sample. Overall, the statistical methods used are well suited for this study and the writing of the manuscript is excellent.

Major compulsory revisions:

My main comment is about the primary predictor variable: categorizing the groups as PCP alone vs. PCP with APRN/PA appears to dilute the major research question about whether nurse practitioners and physicians assistants can effectively deliver these preventive services. This is especially true since the dataset used in the analysis cannot identify whether the service was provided by a specific provider, only whether it was received. Even if there are small numbers within this large dataset, it is possible to report the prevention and screening practices among those who only saw APRN/PAs during the year? Or alternatively, providing some national context for how many nurse practitioners and physicians assistants tend to practice in collaboration with a PCP (rather than alone) might make the existing grouped categorization more meaningful for the reader. As the findings currently read, the importance of seeing a PCP for preventive screenings (with or without an APRN/PA) jump out as the most essential conclusions of the paper -- that is, that it is much worse to see specialists alone, with the APRN/PA finding somewhat more minor.

Specific minor comments:

It seems that the more specific overview of previous studies in this area (in the 3rd paragraph of the Intro) would be better suited in the Discussion as a direct comparison to your findings.

Mentioning the theoretical framework in both the Intro and Methods without describing more specifically how your variables of interest matched to this model raises additional questions. I recommended removing the model or adding more specifics about its application. For example, the last sentence on page 4 when discussing the model mentions the "availability of primary care physicians" as a critical factor -- but I don't think this is something that can be measured directly in your work.

Minutes of physical activity -- please clarify that this survey item was assessed as yes/no (receipt of counseling to continue/start exercise), not specific to the
amount of physical activity (e.g., 150 minutes of moderate or vigorous exercise/week).

Both the first paragraph and the last paragraph of the Methods mention the IRB, which is duplicative.

**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