Reviewer’s report

Title: Relationships between deprivation and duration of emergency admissions for common childhood acute illness in North West England: an analysis of hospital episode statistics

Version: 2 Date: 7 December 2011

Reviewer: Alex Bottle

Reviewer’s report:

The manuscript is clearer now.

Minor essential revisions

The response to question 5 (about inter-hospital transfers) is: “The potential adverse impact of double counting was mitigated during processing of HES data by matching duplicate cases and removing these prior to analysis.” This doesn’t say what “duplicate cases” means and I suspect refers to duplicate FCEs. This isn’t the same as transfers, which are a potential problem as I mentioned in my initial review. This point still needs addressing, at least by quantifying the number of transfers (which may be small).

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests’