Reviewer’s report

Title: Relationship between Depressive Symptom Severity and Emergency Department Use Among Low-Income, Depressed Older Adults

Version: 2 Date: 30 July 2012

Reviewer: ANNA RITA ATTI

Reviewer’s report:

I read with interest the well written manuscript by Namkee G. Choi and colleague. Their study aims to investigate the association between depressive symptom severity and ED visits verifying the efficacy of an intervention of tele-health therapy. The question posed is original and well defined, methods are appropriate, data are sound and the interpretation is careful.

Two minor concerns deserve a revision.

1) Studies base on self-report are likely to encounter a recall or a response bias. Please provide a comment on this issue in the discussion section.

2) Age classification varies among countries and over time. It usually reflects the social class differences or functional ability related to the workforce. Most developed world countries have accepted the chronological age of 65 years as a definition of ‘elderly’ or older person. Please reconsider your definition of the study population in terms of age. For example, change the current title as follows: “Relationship between depressive symptom severity and emergency department use among low-income, depressed older adults persons aged 50+”.

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.