Reviewer's report

Title: Significant differences in the use of healthcare resources of native-born and foreign-born in Spain.

Version: 2 Date: 26 October 2008

Reviewer: Brian Gushulak

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

None Noted

Minor Essential Revisions

There are three issues that I think deserve comment in either the comments or discussion.

1. While the numbers of migrants from the EU, Canada and the USA are low and would not have been expected to have influenced the analytical outcome, it would be useful to note why those individuals are assumed to have migrated to Spain for non economic reasons. The logic may be based on the assumption that they share similar health characteristics with the host Spanish populaiton or that many in these cohorts are retired and will not be working, but as intra EU migration increases there may be differences in health care care utilizaion and health characterisics between member states that may influence demands for service.

2. A second issue that deserves some comment in regards to emergency room utilization is the process of acculturation and adaption. It would be important to know how the duration of residence in Spain influenced utilization patterns. New arrivals may be more likely to use emergency room services that those who have lived in the country for years, for example.

3. The issue of language, translation and cultural competancy of those administering the questionnaires should probably be noted in the discussion of the limitations of the study. While many of the migrants originated from Latin America and probably used Spanish as their native tongue, the same may not be true for those from Africa. This can be particularly important in surveys using either open ended questions or medical terminology in a multicultural context.

Discretionary Revisions

None noted

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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'

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October 25, 2008