Reviewer's report

Title: Referral and provision of specific dental procedures by general dentists in the National Dental Practice-Based Research Network: questionnaire findings

Version: 2 Date: 9 October 2014

Reviewer: K A Atchison

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MS: Referral and provision of specific dental procedures by GDs in the National DPBRN version 2014.0.06

This is an excellent manuscript that describes an interesting analysis and would be of genuine interest.

Introduction is well-conceived, and brings in international studies that put confidence intervals on what one might expect to see in the analysis.

Methods are clear. Statistical analysis appropriately selects a probability level 0.001 that reflects the very large sample size, and concentrates on associations that are "substantively related" and meet a secondary criterion of size of the difference. A secondary statistical review is not needed.

Results: The data tables are readily available online for reference so that readers may review and make their own interpretation. The embedded tables are clear and useful in understanding the results.

Although individual linear regression was made on each of the dentist and practice characteristics, selected potential confounders (e.g. graduation year and work status for gender) were chosen and regressed in multivariate analyses to examine confounding.

The authors should make Minor Essential Revisions to the Discussion: There could be a stronger tie of the Introduction literature findings and the results in the Discussion, particularly on the impact of the workforce practices on service availability in the US, and for which populations.

The authors use hypotheses in several but not all sections of the Discussion (e.g. Dental Specialists on site and Waiting times). This useful practice would make the discussion much clearer to the reader.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests: I do not have competing interests in this topic.