**Author's response to reviews**

**Title:** Should the provision of home help services be contained? : Validation of the new preventive care programme in Japan

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**Version:** 2 **Date:** 2 March 2010

**Author's response to reviews:** see over
25 February 2010

BMC Health Services Research

Dear Dr. Melissa Norton;

On behalf of all the authors, I would like to ask you to consider our manuscript entitled “Should the provision of home help services be suppressed?: Validation of the new prevention-oriented system in Japan” for publication in BMC Health Services Research as an original research article. This retrospective study was to establish the validity of the policy to encourage the use of day care services and to restrict the use of home help services by observing decline in functional status as measured by their eligibility level. This study was joint study with the municipal government of a suburban city of Tokyo, and the data derived from this survey would not convey any private information.

Multivariate analysis with factors related to service use as covariates demonstrated that the risk of decline in functional status was lower for users of home help services than for users of day care services. No evidence was obtained to support the effectiveness of the policy of promoting day care services and restricting the use of home help services. We feel that findings from this study will be of special interest to the readers of BMC Health Services Research.

This manuscript has not been published and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. Dr Ikegami and I have read the manuscript and have approved this submission. Financial support for this study was provided by Pfizer Health Research Foundation (grant numbers 08-2-025). The authors report no conflicts of interest.

Sincerely,

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