Reviewer's report

Title: Home healthcare services in Taiwan: a nationwide study among older population

Version: 1 Date: 30 April 2010

Reviewer: Luz M León-Muñoz

Reviewer's report:

REPORT to BMC Health Services Research

Paper: Chang HT et al. Home healthcare services in Taiwan: a nationwide study among older population

This manuscript reports the home healthcare utilization among the older population in Taiwan. The main interest of the study is that data come from a whole country. So, it represents a contribution to the literature. Nevertheless, authors should attend some comments to improve the paper.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. Information in tables 1 and 2 is redundant. Authors should lump both tables into one to present only relevant data: “Number of home care patients (% of beneficiaries)”, “Number of home healthcare visits (%), and “Home healthcare visits per patient (mean±SD)”.

2. Women were more likely to receive home care services than men. Please test the statistical significance of gender differences.

3. Figure 1 is not clear. Does this figure indicate that almost 20% of the women receiving some home healthcare services were visited from one to three times? If this is the case, the sum of all five percentages for women must be 100. Another possible interpretation is that the first pair of columns (first category of nº of visits per patient) represents the sex-distribution of older people who received from one to three visits. In this case, the sum of both male and female percentages must be 100, for this and for every category of number of visits per patient. Please explain in the text the meaning of the percentages in figure 1 and how these percentages have been calculated.

4. Grammar must be revised, particularly in page 11. Perhaps shorter sentences would help to understand the reasons why the number of patients receiving home healthcare in 2004 under NHI was much lower that the estimated disabled population.

5. Please, avoid presenting the same information in text and in tables. This is particularly the case for tables 3 and 4.

Minor Essential Revisions:
1. English language should be revised.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**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