Reviewer's report

Title: Reorienting PBMA towards disinvestment

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Reviewer: Sabina Nuti

Reviewer's report:

Discretionary Revisions:

The article treats a very interesting and actual theme considering also the current economic crisis that western countries are facing. Due to this crisis, reduction and readjustments of health expenditures are in fact needed.

The paper is well organized and structured in the proposed issues however specific evidences regarding the suggested hypothesis are missing.

The author makes a bibliographic review of the different experiences regarding the application of PBMA method. He underlines how these experiences appeared to be inefficient not only to reallocate resources but also to determine where to disinvest and to reduce allocated resources.

These author’s critics seem to be based on personal opinions which could be almost completely shared; however, they lack of empirical evidence and of any discussion with the authors of the previous cited articles.

Thus, from the methodological point of view, it could have been interesting to include in the paper the results of a survey involving the authors which are mentioned throughout the paper or at least with the members of Advisory group in charge to trial the suggested method in Southern Health hospital network.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

The author should deepen the discussion at page 4 where he argues Mitton’s opinion on the role of “a genuine interest in improving the health of the population” in determining efficiency and service reductions by proposing budget restraints as more efficient stimulus.

I suggest the author to distinguish between public no-profit and private organizations and to analyze the role the interest in improving health population may have in the two environments.

Finally the author should also analyze the role benchmarking processes have in convincing professionals on the feasibility of reinvestment processes (see for instance: Nuti,S., Vainieri, M., Bonini, A., 2010 “Disinvestment for re-allocation: A process to identify priorities in healthcare”, Health Policy, 95/2-3) and on data publication that has an impact on professional reputation (see for instance: Bevan, G., Hood, C. (2006). What’s Measured is What Matters: Targets and Gaming in the English Public Health Care System. Public Administration, 84(3),...
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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.