Reviewer’s report

**Title**: Assessing the context of health care utilization in Ecuador: A spatial and multilevel analysis

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**Reviewer**: Marek Brabec

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This is an interesting paper, both from subject matter point of view and methodologically. Some of the findings have some weight potentially not only from research point of view but also for judgments about efficiency of various strategies for improvement of health care system (see e.g. the discussion on page 10, concerning the rural*public health interactions), and hence they are of certain practical importance.

Methodologically, the paper uses a whole bunch of modern statistical techniques, both from Spatial Statistics and from hierarchical modeling (in the context of generalize linear models). The authors tried sincerely to overcome some of the technical obstacles (including complications introduced by the complex character of the underlying survey data) by using these techniques quite appropriately. Spatial part is less complete, but that might be a theme for a detailed study to be subject of a next paper.

Nice and quite rare in practically oriented papers as this is the exploration of interactions. The authors should be applauded for that.

The paper should be published.