Reviewer's report

Title: Patient characteristics associated with hospitalisations for Ambulatory Care Sensitive Conditions in Victoria, Australia

Version: 2 Date: 29 October 2012

Reviewer: Jean Yoon

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General comments

1. This manuscript analyzed hospitalizations from one state in Australia and looked at patient factors that were associated with preventable hospitalizations. The manuscript makes use of a comprehensive dataset of hospitalizations and indexes of socioeconomic status and rurality/remoteness. The study findings confirm results of previous research on the association between low socioeconomic status and rural residence with higher preventable hospitalizations.

2. There are methodological issues which are problematic. It was not clear which estimates presented were unadjusted and which were adjusted.

3. Overall, the potential to contribute new information from this manuscript was minimal.

Specific comments

4. The abstract did not contain any estimates of effect size of the significant predictors of ACSC admissions.

5. The background section discusses previous work on ACSC hospitalizations, socioeconomics, and rural residence, and the unique contribution of this study is not clear other than the fact that the study looked at data from Victoria, Australia.

6. The methods section does not cite which conditions and which diagnosis fields were used to code ACSC hospitalizations. The admitting/primary diagnosis is usually the only diagnosis used to measure ACSC hospitalizations. The authors also selected a random set of non-ACSC hospitalizations for comparison. It was not clear why this was done or why there needed to be an equal number. Was this limited set of hospitalizations the denominator used for the analyses? This seems problematic, as it's not clear why all hospitalizations or a set of tracer conditions weren't used. The authors also coded ACSCs as yes/no when there could have been multiple hospitalizations for the same individual yet they are treated as independent observations.

7. In the results section, there is no overall description of the study cohort. I found the main results difficult to read the way it was presented by condition.

8. In the discussion it wasn’t clear what the generalizability and relevance of this research was to those outside of Victoria, Australia.
**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**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.