Reviewer’s report

Title: Application of propensity scores to estimate the association between government subsidy and injection use in primary health care institutions in China

Version: 3 Date: 19 March 2013

Reviewer: Yu-Chun Chen

Reviewer’s report:

Minor Essential Revisions
This is a greatly improved version. The authors added more quantitative measurements and detail information to make the study more clear. There still few points that require the authors’ attention.

In the method part, the authors’ argument is questionable. In the reference 26 (Rubin DB, 1996), confounders that related with both exposure and outcome variable should not be included in PSM model. Furthermore, in the reference 27 (Brookhart MA, 2006), the authors indeed suggest include that variables related to the outcome but variables unrelated to the exposure in a PS model. Obviously, the government subsidy and the number of staff, as a function of GS and act as confounders should not be included in the PS model. I would suggest either remove these two variables from the PSM model or revise the sentence “it is best to select all variables related to the outcome regardless of their relation to the exposure” (page 9, page 13).

In the first paragraph of results, how does the authors give the following data “14.26 % for rational injection use institutions and 48.73% for irrational injection use institutions”? How about the rest 37.01%? (page 10)

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests