Reviewer's report

Title: Use of health services in people with multiple sclerosis with and without depressive symptoms: a two-year prospective study

Version: 1 Date: 19 July 2013

Reviewer: David Mohr

Reviewer's report:

Major comments:
Introduction: Authors provide a good review of highlights of research on condition in introduction. I would like to know a bit more about the rationale for examining the use of health services and specific occupations in a little more detail. Is there some level of expected care or unique need that the occupations or support services being studied could provide?

A concern was the Methods and Table 1 do not appear to contain similar information. For example, things like disease course was listed in the table, but does not seem to be explained in the text. Also, use of antidepressants was discussed in text, but does not appear in the table. So, this was a bit frustrating to see it in the Results, but not Methods or Tables. Similar comment for outpatient care and hospital days. These seem like issues fairly easy to fix by adjusting text and tables to be more focused or more inclusive. Maybe it would be helpful to remove them as the focus tended to be more on the use of occupations and support services, but not quite sure if the others wanted to expand the discussion on these issues in the Introduction instead.

The strengths and limitations section was a bit brief. I wondered what the authors would envision as a next step in this line of research as they mention an aim of the study was to explore and compare health services usage. Is the next step to make recommendations or study the role of different services in care? Something about potential logic directions would be informative. Are findings likely to generalize to other health care systems?

Minor:
Results section: Much of the focus is on presenting findings without providing statistical significance test results. This may have been a style preference of the authors and some findings were highlighted in the tables, such as seeing the effect size of the difference in the text for cases where there was no significant association (i.e., was it close to .05?).

It seems like Table 1 could also have test statistics described in a similar manner as Tables 2 and 3.

Discretionary comments:
The authors mention conducting interviews with participants. I would like more
detail about these and whether they were related to the present study, it appears they did not related.

**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