Reviewer’s report

Title: Differences in the Structure of Outpatient Diabetes Care between Endocrinologist-Led and General Physician-Led Services: findings from a cross-sectional observational study

Version: 1 Date: 3 September 2013

Reviewer: Kentaro Okazaki

Reviewer’s report:

The paper by Donnell et al. entitled “Differences in the Structure of Outpatient Diabetes Care between Endocrinologist-Led and General Physician-Led Services: findings from a cross-sectional observational study” is a solid study about the quality of diabetes care at the public hospitals in Ireland. The authors found the significant differences in the structure of outpatient diabetes care comparing endocrinologist-led services to general physician-led ones.

- Major Compulsory Revisions

1) In the section of introduction, the authors might give us more information of the role of public hospitals in the healthcare system in Ireland by adding some data. For example, the total number of private hospitals, private and public clinics might be helpful. Usually where do patients visit first? Do they have free access to any clinic/hospital and/or general physician/specialist? If not, please describe the healthcare system in Ireland briefly.

2) In the result section, the authors should use tables or figures for readers to understand the contents more easily. Also, it seems to be much better if the tables or figures focus on the comparison between endocrinologist and general physician reflecting the title of this article.

3) In discussion, the authors need to state clearly which result was especially interesting and how the result can be used for better diabetes care in Ireland.

- Minor Essential Revisions

4) Does the word WTE mean “whole-time-equivalent”? The authors should spell out this word at the first appearance, because this abbreviation may not be so familiar for some readers including me.

- Discretionary Revisions

5) The authors mentioned waiting times for newly diagnosed type 2 diabetes patients. I do not understand well who refers patients to centers with an endocrinologist or a general physician. In other words, usually how and where is a patient newly diagnosed as diabetes? At annual health checkup at general physician clinic or by chance at general physician clinic?
6) In the discussion, it is hard for me to catch the following sentence, “Stable patients… were recalled to the diabetes outpatients routinely…” Would you please give me some explanation?

**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.'