Reviewer's report

Title: Efficiency of Health Centers Groups in Lisbon and Tagus Valley - An approach with Data Envelopment Analysis

Version: 2 Date: 28 September 2013

Reviewer: Giulia Romano

Reviewer's report:

- Major Compulsory Revisions

The paper lacks a thorough analysis of the literature. The Authors should add a paragraph in which illustrate the existing literature on the analysis of efficiency in the Health Care industry. What are the methods most commonly used? the DEA is among them? if so, which variables are most commonly used? which results have been found so far? etc.

Moreover, the literature review will also help to better understand and justify the choice of the methodology and the use of three orientations and both CRS and VRS.

The Authors should better explain whether the lack of data as described in paragraph case study is a significant limitation of the research. the literature review will help us to understand it.

The paper should be improved in clarity and readability. The references are poorly legible and appear as question marks. The authors should avoid abbreviations (such as NUTS III in the abstract or USF at p. 4) without prior explain their meanings.

The paragraph about “Primary Health Care in Portugal” should be improved in clarity. It is quite long but many sentences are difficult to understand for a foreign reader. For instance, “However, this process was not totally peaceful, mainly because of the significant differences in the physical and human heritage” or “However, in practice the situation of dependence was basically the same” or “these structures had very limited management autonomy”. In the same paragraph, we suggest to explain when the ACES became operational in Portugal. In 2009 as it has been said on page 11? If this is the case, do you think it is a limitation of the paper since you study 2009 and 2010?

Please provide data used for paragraph “Equity of access”.

What are the differences between Figures 3 and 4?

- Minor Essential Revisions

In the abstract we suggest you review the sentence “We investigated the horizontal equity based on the territorial unit NUTS III and this analysis showed that here is no evidence of relevant differences”. Significant differences between
what?

Table 7 contains a mistake. Distance to the reference hospital and Purchasing power are related to the same description of the influence.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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