Author's response to reviews

Title: Process-related factors associated with disciplinary board decisions

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Cover letter giving a point-by-point response to the concerns

We wish to thank the reviewers again for good and constructive criticisms and comments.

This cover letter gives a point-by-point response to the issues raised in reviewer 2’s report.

Response to Reviewer 2’s report
Reviewer 2 proposes a number of minor essential revisions:
“It took me some time to fully understand the difference between the analyses of the compound decisions and the decisions relating to individual GP's. Some additional clarification in the methods section would be welcomed”.

Authors’ comments:
Please see the ‘Analyses’ section and ‘Results’ section. The descriptions of variables ‘compound decisions’ and ‘decisions about separate GPs’ have been clarified.

“In the results section it might be mentioned that no separate table is presented for the analysis of the compound decisions”.

Authors’ comments:
Please see revised manuscript, ‘Results’ section, 4th paragraph.

Likewise, Reviewer 2 proposes some Discretionary revisions:
“In the discussion one may consider that the disciplinary system was primarily developed to safeguard against individual professionals that did not perform according to professional standards. But, with the increased complexity of health care, risks are not anymore limited to the performance of individuals but the very often relate to issues regarding (the lack of) coordination and communication between professions. The disciplinary system is not set up for this type of problems. Authors refer to the ‘Patientombuddet’ system as developed to tackle this type of problems. I would like to know a bit more, what are the sanctions this system can impose upon care providers and the relationship with the disciplinary system”.

Authors’ comments:
Please see the revised manuscript, ‘Discussion’ section, 4th paragraph, which concerns the issues raised by Reviewer 2 including information about the ‘Patientombuddet’ system and the relationship with the disciplinary system.

On behalf of all authors,

Yours sincerely,

Søren Birkeland