Reviewer's report

Title: An evaluation of the discriminant and predictive validity of relative social disadvantage as screening criteria for priority access to public general dental care, in Australia.

Version: 3
Date: 18 November 2013

Reviewer: Christine Friestad

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions
No comments in this category.

Minor Essential Revisions
1) The actual administration of the screening questions presented in Table 1 should be clarified. We need to know whether staff explicitly presented the examples presented in Table 1, or whether they asked only the open-ended question (“Why have you contacted the clinic today?”), and by themselves categorized the patients' answers according to the listed alternatives.

2) Results section, Regression Analysis-Model 2, first sentence, reads “(…) regression modeling was performed using all general treatment screening questions (..)”. From the listing in Table 5, however, three out of the 17 screening questions presented in Tables 1 and 4 are missing. This needs to be explained or corrected.

Minor issues not for publication:
3) The manuscript refers to "Box 1" on two occasions (first paragraph under the heading Data Collection, and then in the second paragraph under the heading Statistical and analytic methods), but the manuscript does not seem to contain a figure denoted Box 1.

4) Data collection, third paragraph, second sentence: "patient priority of" is repeated twice.

5) Receiver operator characteristics (ROC) - Model 2, second sentence: Figure 2 is referred to, but does not seem to exist.

Discretionary revisions
6) Results section: Most of the headings in this section refer to the method of analysis applied (for instance: Regression Analysis – Model 1), rather than what was the aim of the analyses. The paper aims at investigating two main issues, namely the discriminant and predictive validity of the relative social disadvantage screen, and it would be good if the result section was organized accordingly. One paragraph could present the analyses conducted to investigate the discriminant validity, another paragraph could focus on results of the analyses aimed at
investigating the predictive validity. The same form of presentation could be applied in the discussion section.

**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.