Reviewer's report

Title: "It's easier in pharmacy": why some patients prefer to pay for flu jabs rather than use the National Health Service

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Reviewer: Ying-Chun Li

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This paper explored an interesting question regarding why some patients prefer to pay privately for the flu vaccination than use the National Health Service in UK. The findings of the paper can provide reference for vaccination policy to the countries with similar vaccine delivery system. However, there are some critical points that need to be revised as follows.

A. Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Background, first paragraph: The study samples were those under 65 years of age and at risk group. Nevertheless, there is no clear definition about the “at risk group” in the paper. It is necessary to describe what conditions are considered as at risk group.

2. Background, first paragraph: Why targeted patients under 65 years of age as the study sample? Any specified reason? It is better to provide related references to support the study design.

3. Method, first paragraph: How to choose the 13 pharmacies as the locations of collecting data needs more explanations.

4. Method, first paragraph: How to conduct the survey to collect information from patients needs more detail descriptions. Is there any questionnaire used? If yes, how to develop the questionnaire? Is there any test of reliability and validity of the questionnaire?

5. Results, sixth paragraph: For those “100 patients (50%) who had been contacted by their GP about going into their local surgery for their vaccination, but had chosen not to”, it is more relevant to the study objective to explore their reasons of choosing pharmacy as vaccination site.

6. Limitations, first paragraph: The authors described that “the data presented are limited to one pharmacy multiple”. This is a generalization issue of interpretation for study results. However, the authors described that “if data from other pharmacies were explored similar results are likely to be found”. Without providing related reference or data, it is hard to support this viewpoint.

B. Minor Essential Revisions

1. Background, third paragraph: The last sentence of this paragraph describes “The pharmacy service did not impact on the uptake of flu vaccinations from GP surgeries: there was no decrease in GP vaccination rates in the area”. It is better to provide some data to support this description.
2. If the data is available, it is interested to know the time of people receiving flu vaccination in the pharmacy. Is it more likely in the weekend or after working hours? If yes, it can provide additional evidence that pharmacy have more convenient opening hours than GP service to provide flu vaccination.

3. Results, sixth paragraph: Table 4 provides redundant information of the study. I suggest to delete it.

C. Discretionary Revisions

1. Background, first paragraph: The first paragraph of Background section is too long. It can be ended in the sentence “This paper explores how prevalent this is and the reason why people choose to do it”. Then, the rest of sentences in the original first paragraph can be switched as next paragraph.

2. Table 1: The total number of patients in second column (n=132) does not equal to the n=100 presented at third column. It should add notes to indicate patients satisfied more than one criteria (as Table 2 did).

3. Table 3: In the third column, the n should be 199. It is also necessary to add note about the patients satisfied more than one criteria.

4. References: The reference number 13 did not provide web linkage of the document, if have any.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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.