Author's response to reviews

Title: Factors associated with the utilization of primary care emergency centers in a Spanish region with high population dispersion: a mixed-methods study

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Sir:

On behalf of all co-authors, I submit the enclosed manuscript “Factors associated with the utilization of primary care emergency centers in a Spanish region with high population dispersion: a mixed-methods study” for consideration by BMC Health Services Research.

An adequate access to primary care emergency centers is particularly important in rural areas isolated from urban centers. However, variability in utilization of emergency services located in primary care centers among inhabitants of nearby geographical areas is understudied. With the objective of increasing breadth and depth of understanding regarding primary care emergency centers use, a mixed-method study was designed. First, by a quantitative fase, we analyze the association between the availability of municipal emergency care centers and utilization of primary care emergency centers in a Spanish region with high population dispersion. Second, by a qualitative fase, we analyze the healthcare providers’ perceptions regarding primary care emergency centers utilization. The study adheres to the RATS guidelines on qualitative research.

This study has not been published in this or a substantially similar form (in print or electronically, including on a web site), nor accepted for publication elsewhere, nor is it under consideration by another publication.

All authors have signed this letter as confirmation that they have read and approved the paper, have met the criteria for authorship as stated by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Concretely all the authors have made: 1) substantial contributions to conception and design or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and 3) final approval of the version to be published.

Non-financial conflicts of interest exist for any authors.