Reviewer's report

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

**Version:** 3  **Date:** 12 November 2013

**Reviewer:** Marie-Pierre Gagnon

**Reviewer's report:**

This paper reports a mixed-methods study of the relationships between emergency care utilisation and geographic location.

My major concern is that the study uses census data from 2003 as the source of information regarding emergency care utilisation. Interviews were conducted between January 2008 and December 2009, so there could be a large gap between emergency services utilisation portrayed in 2003 and the situation that was described in 2009. In the study limitations, it would be important to mention that data collection took place at different times, and that the information could be out-dated.

I have some additional minor comments:

1- In the qualitative part of the study, it is said that participants were volunteers, but how were these specific participants selected?

2- What was the total number of potential participants?

3- Were interview transcripts returned to interviewees in order to check for accuracy?

4- How many people performed qualitative analyses?

5- In the sentence “... included 14 in-depth interviews of 6 general and 8 primary care nurses” (p. 9), do you mean “general practitioners”? 

6- The section “Possible Explanations” should be integrated with the Discussion and placed before “Study limitations”.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

**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