Author's response to reviews

Title: A descriptive retrospective study of time consumption in home care services: how do employees use their working time? Use of geographic information systems for spatial analysis of home care services in two northern Norwegian municipalities.

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Author's response to reviews:

Responses to the comments of Jennifer Chipps

Major Compulsory Revisions
1. Editing to improve structure of paragraphs.
Response: We have improved structure of paragraphs

2. Background: Should be reworked and strengthened.
Response: We have done that

3. Information should be provided about % of time actually spend on clinical work – there are a number of these studies published.
Response: We did not gain data about % of time actually spent on clinical work from the employees. We gained data from the planned weekly day schedules and driving routes.
We did not find articles about % of time actually spend on clinical work related to home care services, but we refer to a report from Denmark. Since the work in home care services fluctuate from week to week, it is difficult to compare.

4. Methodology description needs to be refined for clarity
Response: Additional material submitted by the reviewers 1446028060131228 says the methods employed are appropriate and generally well described.

5. Study participants should include information on the number of HCR in these areas
Response: We have inserted a table, Table 1, with information on the number of home care recipients in these areas.

6. Study participants should be renamed Setting and 2 paragraphs merged
Response: Done
7. Some of the Figures are unclear – not sure what I should be looking at in Figure 7 and Figure 3

Response: We have explained the figures in more detail in the text. Figure 7 is changed to figure 4.

Minor Essential Revisions
8. First statement should be referenced
Response: Done

9. I would recommend not referring to HCS but Home Care Services throughout.
Response: We have changed HCS to home care services and HCR to home care recipients throughout the article.

10. Why this study- paragraph should be integrated and not be separate points
Response: Done

11. Table footers to not include acronyms
Response: removed

Responses to the comments of Anne Martin-Matthews

1. Major Compulsory Revisions
Response: See Responses to the comments of 1446028060131228 below

2. Discretionary Revisions
Response: We deleted the phrase.

Responses to the comments of 1446028060131228

1. The authors likely have additional data (based on repeated measures of the same route by different drivers, times of day, etc etc) that may provide more in-depth analysis of the reasons for the apparently substantial variability in transit times, visiting times, and other tasks/ documentation times.
Response: In this project we only gained data from the planned weekly day schedules and driving routes. The Regional Committee of Ethics (Northern Norway) has only given us permission to go through the home care services documents. We have already been asked for a new project from the managers to make a comparison between the written weekly schedules and how the staff spend their time on working. Maybe the planning can be better.

2. The manuscript will be significantly enhanced if the reasons for the broad range of variability in driving and visiting times within municipalities are examined in more depth
Response: We have written more about range of variability