Author's response to reviews

Title: Impact of a fixed price system on the supply of institutional long-term care: a comparative study of Japanese and German metropolitan areas

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Author's response to reviews:

Dr Christopher Morrey
Executive Editor
BMC Health Services Research
July 15, 2013
Dear Dr Christopher Morrey,
Dear editors of BMC Health Services Research,
Please find enclosed the manuscript entitled “Impact of fixed price system on supply of institutional long-term care: A comparative study between Japanese and German metropolitan areas”. We would like to submit for publication as a research article in BMC Health Services Research. The study focuses on the relationship between cost/need and equitable supply of institutional long-term care in a fixed price system (Japan) and none-fixed price systems (Japan and Germany) in social insurance settings. There are studies about excess demand of institutional long-term care under fixed prices in the USA. But so far, there seem to have been neither studies about excess demand in Japan nor studies broaching the issue of influence of the price system on equitable supply of institutional long-term care. We believe that this study can provide material for scientific as well as political discussion to deal with the shortage of institutional care. We decided for BMC Health Services Research because the journal’s scope matches aspects of our
study like delivery of care or impact of regulations of a health system in comparison with others. We also agree with the policy of open access which promotes equal access to information as well as lessens barriers of research activities for everyone. We hope you will accept the study for publication in the BMC journal “Health Services Research” or another journal if you find it more suitable. We confirm that this manuscript has not been published elsewhere and is not under consideration by another journal. All authors have approved the manuscript and agree with submission to BMC Health Services Research. The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare. We would like to recommend the following researchers as potential reviewers:

(1) Dr Kozo TAKASE (MD)
Institution: Division of Research Development, Tokyo Medical and Dental University Graduate School.
Mail: ktakase.rdev@tmd.ac.jp
(Reason for recommendation: He specializes in health policy and covers a wide range of methodical approaches. Although he is a professor at the same university as us, the main author does not know him personally and the co-author has no competing interest with him.)

(2) Dr Tetsuo FUKAWA
Institution: Institution for Future Welfare fukawa@ifwj.org.
(Reason for recommendation: He is a renowned researcher in the health and social policy in Japan and well informed about both Japanese and German health and social systems)

(3) Dr Heinz Rothgang
Institution: University of Bremen
Mail: heinz.rothgang@zes.uni-bremen.de
(Reason for recommendation: He is a prominent researcher in the field of long-term care service researches in Germany. The main author knows him only as author of many studies in this field.)
and referred to his works in this study, too.)

We would like to add some organizational remarks:
- We are going to try to attach bivariate correlation matrixes as additional files. They might take too much space in the article, but could be relevant for reviewers and some experts. Please kindly contact us if we should upload as tables in the manuscript.
- Data collected for this study have no direct reference to individuals or clinical trials.

We are looking forward hearing from you. Please kindly contact keiko.yoshida@t-online.de as main and corresponding author.

Yours sincerely,

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