Reviewer's report

Title: Disparities in preventive care: comparison of self-report and medicare claims data

Version: 1 Date: 19 June 2006

Reviewer: Dan Berlowitz

Reviewer's report:

General
The current manuscript describes differences in disparities that are noted depending on whether administrative or self-reported data on the use of preventive services are utilized. The manuscript makes an important contribution in documenting the extent of such differences. It is well-written and I have relatively few comments.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
The authors apparently have a similar manuscript in press dealing solely with mammography. It should be very clear whether the mammography data reported in the present manuscript is the same data or whether new/different information is contained.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
The first paragraph of Background states that there are differences in the size of the disparity for self-report and claims data with mammography. However, no reference is provided here.

It would be helpful to better describe the exact wording used by the survey in describing race/ethnicity.

A very important limitation (and some may view as fatal flaw) is the inability to differentiate between screening and diagnostic tests. Any information from other studies that describes the extent to which these tests are for screening would be very helpful.

The Statistical Analyses section should describe the use of kappa.

Table 3 should describe what factors are being adjusted for in a footnote. Additionally, it should be clarified why the sample sizes are different in the unadjusted and adjusted analyses.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests