Reviewer's report

Title: Referrals from general practice to consultants in Germany: If the GP is the initiator, patients' experiences are more positive

Version: 2 Date: 11 November 2005

Reviewer: Steve Kisely

Reviewer's report:

General
This version is much improved. In particular, the authors’ description of the German health system and policy context provided a much clatter rationale foe the study.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
None at this stage

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
1) The last 4 sentences of the introduction are redundant & should be omitted. They essentially repeat the last few sentences of the previous paragraph.
2) The authors need to add the description they provide in their covering letter of how they developed the survey instrument to the methods section of the paper. Can they provide ant details of the qualitative methods used to choose the domains and any psychometrics of the quantitative instrument? They do acknowledge in the discussion that the study was based on self-report measures that have not been previously validated.
3) In the text and tables ‘very agree’ should be ‘strongly agree’. Can the authors comment on why they used this particular cut-off?

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

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