Reviewer's report

Title: Effects of Residence and Race on Burden of Travel for Care: Cross Sectional Analysis of the 2001 US National Household Travel Survey

Version: 1 Date: 14 December 2006

Reviewer: Tyrone Borders

Reviewer's report:

General
This paper describes results from analyses of a large, nationally representative (U.S.) survey. A strength of the study is that it provides new insight into the travel times and distances that rural residents experiences when accessing health services. A weakness is that it aggregates medical and dental care.[Ty Borders]

I recommend accepting the manuscript if the major and minor revisions are made.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
One of the primary conclusions is that travel patterns may contribute to health disparities. The authors should consider focusing their conclusion on the main findings, rather than leaping a bit to the assumption that travel barriers affect health.

In the control variables section, it would be helpful to know what the medical conditions limiting driving are. Also, the authors should clarify where/how the ecological variables were obtained.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

If possible, it would be beneficial if the authors described the validity of the Claritas definitions of rurality. Alternatively, perhaps they could describe how it compares to other rural classifications.

On a minor note, there should be no "," following Guagliardo on line 8, page 6. The word "care" should follow "medical/dental" on page 11.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

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