Reviewer's report

Title: High workload and job stress were associated with lower practice performance in general practice: an observational study in 249 general practices in the Netherlands

Version: 1 Date: 2 December 2008

Reviewer: Joseph Lee

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

None required.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Minor formatting errors in Results section and headings such as "GP Workload".

Discretionary Revisions

1. As stated in the Strengths and Limitations, this is an observational and exploratory study. As such, it is difficult to make the implication that job performance would improve as a result of increasing GP time per patient or job satisfaction. These may be true but would have to be addressed in another type of study.

2. This study used GP's in fee-for-service practice. There might be more discussion about the potential difference within a capitation or partial blended capitation model.

3. This study did not make reference to GP's using other health care professionals such as nurses, nurse practitioners or others to assist in the management of patients. As there is a trend towards inter-professional primary care, this might have been addressed or discussed.

4. The Conclusion section is quite short and scant. One could consider commenting on some of the Discussion within the Conclusion.

5. Table 2 refers to Actual GP time per patient. The range of hrs/week on the job per 1000 patients is 3.1 to 62.3. This range seems unusual. I wonder whether some respondents made an error. It would be difficult to believe that a GP spends 3.1 hours per week on 1000 patients unless there is some unexplained situation such as involving a nurse practitioner.

6. Table 3 is difficult to read and interpret. I would suggest consideration of reformatting the table.
7. Overall, the study addresses an important topic using a large and representative sample.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.