Reviewer's report

Title: Does salary affect the choice of residency in non-university teaching hospitals? A panel analysis of Japan Residency Matching Program data

Version: 1 Date: 4 May 2012

Reviewer: James Buchan

Reviewer's report:

This is a well written and focused report, using appropriate methods. It requires only Minor Essential Revisions

1. Is the question posed by the authors new and well defined?
   YES

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described, and are sufficient details provided to replicate the work?
   Methods are appropriate, and sufficient details are provided. However some of the statistical analysis should be reviewed by a statistician.

3. Are the data sound and well controlled?
   Apparently yes

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   Yes

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
   Yes

6. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
   Yes

7. Is the writing acceptable
   Yes

p5- provide some explanation (*one or two sentences) why income for university hospital residents being lower

p6 should be "improved payments conditions..."
p6 final sentence - suggest shoud be re written as "....by an endogenously determined annual salary, and by controlling this we aimed to determine the actual effect on a new graduates choice of residency program" [or similar]

p 7 first sentence - is it "issues interim and final annual reports"

p9 "was not reliable to discriminatingly reflect the size.." requires a re write- eg "was not reliable as an indicator of size"??

p11, second top line "Over the studied period of 3 years salary in 2 years was increased...". Not clear and requires a re-write

p12 second para first line- add "the number" so reads "Since the ratio in a smaller quota program is more susceptible to a change in the number of applicants.."

p 13 paragraph beginning "According to.." authors should consider if this is better located in Background section

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'