Author’s response to reviews

Title: Title: Assessment of Client Satisfaction on Emergency Department Services in Hawassa University Referral Hospital, Hawassa, Southern Ethiopia.

Authors:

Mesfin Worku (mesfinwh@gmail.com)

Eskindir Loha (eskindir_loha@yahoo.com)

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Author’s response to reviews:

To: BMC Emergency Medicine editorial office

We would like to express thank to BMC Emergency Medicine editorial office to guide us how to prepare manuscript prior to submission. Our gratitude also goes to the two Reviewers for investing their precious time to give constructive comments and Questions on our manuscript entitled “Assessment of clients’ satisfaction on emergency department service in Hawassa university referral hospital, Hawassa, southern Ethiopia.” Now we are confident enough after valuable assessment of our manuscript by senior scholars. Therefore, we hope Journal of BMC Emergency Medicine will accept our manuscript for publication. Please, we kindly request you to see the underlined response for comment and question.

With regards!

1. Mesfin Worku

2. Eskindir Loha

Editor Comments:

We accepted the comment and the manuscript reviewed by our colleague whose native language is English

Reviewer reports:

Reviewer 1:
The authors are addressing the level of satisfaction associated with patients' use of emergency services in a hospital located in southern Ethiopia.

Respond: We used clients instead of patient. Majority of our study participants were relatives or proxies

General comments

As a comment we accept but the objective of our study is limited to the assessment of client satisfaction for service rendering in Emergency department of the hospital. After we perceived the gap of the service we may further study to identify the determinant factors associated with level of satisfaction.

Specific comments:

Abstract:

Methodology: Include the fact that the authors interviewed a random sample of patients, and clarify what the random sample represents, e.g. does the study sample consist of a random sample of patients using emergency services? Also state that the authors conducted in person interviews of patients.

Response: The study participants were selected by systematic random sampling method. The data was collected by trained data collectors using pre-structured questionnaire.

What was the response rate? Respondent rate is 96% and incorporated

Results: Please clarify/define what medical professions are being referred to by the phrase "laboratory professional" vs "guards".

Response: Laboratory professionals are Medical Laboratory Science staffs of Emergency department who give diagnostic Laboratory service whereas Guards are disciplinarians who are responsible for point of order of clients and security and the terms are modified in the text

Conclusions: Please clarify what is meant by the phrase "availability of drugs". For example, is the lack of satisfaction with pharmacy services related to the inability of patients' to either obtain needed medications because of a lack of supply, or is it due to how expensive the medications are and patients' inability to afford them?

Response: Availability of drugs refers to the presence affordable drugs in the hospital. However lack sustainable supply of these drugs forces the client to buy from private pharmacy in unreasonable price.

Paper:
Methods - Study setting: please indicate what SNNPR stands for when it is first used in the paper.

Response: South Nation and Nationalities People Region (SNNPR) and incorporated in the text

Is the reference to the altitude, temperature, and rainfall pertinent to the paper? If so, please clarify, otherwise, remove these details. A description of the socioeconomic and health status of the general population would be helpful here.

Response: We accepted the comment and did it accordingly

Is the reference to a population of 12 million referring to the people who use the services of the hospital, or the number of people who live within the service area of the hospital who may or may not have used the services of the hospital in 2014.

Response: It is not to mean 12 million of population are using the service rather about 12 million populations are living in catchment area

Study Design: the sections "Study Design and study period, along with sample size determination and sampling method" could all be included within the single heading of "Study Design".

Response: We accepted the comment and did it accordingly in the text

Please clarify what population the random sample represents. Is the study population comprised of a random sample of patients using emergency services in the calendar year 2014? What percent of the patient population is represented by this random sample? What was the overall size of the patient population vs the study sample?

Response: The data was collected from March 13 to May 15, 2014. At this period the total population visited the Emergency department was 2229. Out of 2229, about 18.3% of clients are included in this study.

Measurement and data collection: please specify that the participants were primarily proxies - i.e. relatives of the patient.

When were the interview conducted? 2-4 weeks after the emergency visit? Did the interviewers go to the patient's home or did the proxies come to the hospital for the interviews?

Response: Due to the fact that emergency service is given to 24 hours only, the clients were interviewed immediately after getting Emergency service within this time frame. I.e. at the time of admission to inpatient ward from emergency department or before the clients go to their home after getting emergency service
Data analysis: please use the same verb tense throughout the paper, e.g. instead of saying "will be exported..." and "...statistics will be used", use the past tense "were exported..." and "...statistics were used...".

Response: We accepted the comment and did it accordingly in the text.

Results: what was the response rate? How does the sample of 407 patients compare to the total sample of patients using emergency services?

Response: Respondent rate was 96.9% and incorporated in the text.

Line 31: please use the symbol "\%" to clarify what the statistics 95.6, etc. represent.

Response: We accepted the comment and did it accordingly in the text.

Please clarify/define what medical professions are being referred to by the phrase "laboratory professional" vs "guards".

Response: We accepted the comment and the terms are modified in the text.

Discussion:

The first paragraph belongs in the introduction section and is redundant.

Response: We accepted the comment and modified the paragraph.

Lines 49-50: what is meant by the statement "...due to the nature of the clients and difference in facilities" - please expand/clarify the intent.

Response: We accepted the comment and we clarified and stated the detail in the text.

Line 56: please clarify/expand on what the authors are alluding to when they mention the "unavailability of drugs...". Are they referring to an issue of supply and demand? Are patients generally insured? Are needed drugs not on the formulary (list of drugs covered by insurance)? Are the drugs so expensive that patients cannot afford them?

Response: Concerning to pharmacy services, 68.1% of study subjects were dissatisfied with service render in emergency pharmacy unit. This is because of the unavailability of drugs partially or totally which is prescribed by physicians. As a result the clients forced to buy prescribed drugs with exaggerated price from private pharmacy. Because of this fact, more than half of the study participants were dissatisfied by pharmacy services.

Conclusions: please expand on the potential reasons for low levels of patient satisfaction pertaining to pharmacy services. Is this because pharmacists do not explain how to take the drugs, or drugs not available because....why?
Response: We accepted the comments and stated as “Based on our study fining the lowest level of patient satisfaction (31.9%) was recorded in pharmacy services specifically in availability of drugs due to lack of sustainable supply of drugs. The client forced to get the prescribed drug from private pharmacy which is far from the hospital. This in turn results in unnecessary cost in terms of money as well as time.”

Reviewer 2:

Many thanks for submitting this manuscript which is well written. However, there are few points that authors need to address before it can be accepted for publication.

The authors mention that ‘there is no study on patient satisfaction related to emergency department health care service’. I think this is not correct as there are number of studies conducted on this area. The author may want to say that there was no study in the country or setting where this study was conducted but saying that there is no study on this topic is correct.

Need of the study and its significance can be more clearer.

Response: We accepted the comment and incorporated accordingly

Setting: Some details in the section on study setting is unnecessary and the authors may want to revise this.

Response: Similar comment with other reviewer and we modified the setting by omitting unnecessary parts in the text

The methods section is written in future tense and this needs to rectified as the manuscript is reporting study, so it should be written in the past tense

Response: We accepted this comment and rectified the manuscript in appropriate tense.

More detail about the questionnaire and its psychometric properties should be provided.

A description of the emergency department and associated services would have been useful to later understand the results about laboratory and pharmacy services etc.

The discussion section should have expanded on findings as to what it describes and what findings explain. Contextual information and explanation would have been useful.

Response: We accepted the comment and tried to incorporate it in the text
Overall, the manuscript need to be thoroughly reviewed for readability, grammar and sentence structure appropriateness

Response: Similar comment is given by reviewer and editorial office. We accepted the comment and the manuscript reviewed by our colleague whose native language is English