Reviewer’s report

Title: What are emergency ambulance services doing to meet the needs of people who call frequently? A national survey of current practice in the United Kingdom

Version: 0 Date: 24 Nov 2019

Reviewer: David Peran

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for inviting me to review this article. I would like to thank the authors for their work on this topic which is actual, interesting and important for all pre-hospital providers around the World. Please find my minor comments below:

Abstract, title and references
The title is informative and relevant to the content of the article. Abstract summaries the content in a clear way.
This topic is not really common in the literature. The authors used both research articles and also other sources of information. References are relevant and recent.

Background
Introduction into the topic and research question are well described.
The authors might just add reference to the agreement of the UK ambulance services about the frequent caller (page 4, line 65-66/23-25).

Methods
Methods used in this manuscript are well described and used appropriately.
There might be a different between "frequent caller" and "frequent user". The authors might clarify if the term "frequent caller" in this paper means a person who used the ambulance or just called the ambulance (seeking an advice or calling to someone else…).

Results
Results are described in a clear and understandable way.
The sentence on page 6, line 171/45 is unclear: "Patients may be invited to attend meetings (services 1, 4) or not (service 2)." It seems like the patients were invited to attend or not attend the meeting, which seems illogical. But it might be just feeling.

Discussion and Conclusions
Results are discussed from multiple angles and placed in context.
I would suggest to add one important thing which is the potential problem of frequent callers/users - the unrecognized severe medical issue of the frequent caller by the dispatch centre or that the frequent caller might be afraid to call again even when severe problem occurs. This might be a big limitation of the case management and the providers might be very cautious when implementing and using it.
Figures and tables
Table and Box are understandable, described and support the results and discussion part.

Summary

This qualitative survey is well designed and brings a clear data of current situation in the UK. Future research might be done also in other countries with different systems to find the best possible solution. This article might support next research in this area (e.g. the impact of the case management).

Major points in the article which need clarification, refinement, reanalysis, rewrite and/or additional information and suggestions for what could be done to improve the article:

1) clarifying the term "frequent caller".

Minor points (typos etc.):

1) typos in references on page 4 (line 74/35; line 79/42) and page 5 (line 122/40);
2) reference to the agreement of the UK Ambulance services (page 4, line 65/23).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript
Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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