Author's response to reviews

Title: Who gets a family physician through centralized waiting lists?

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Version: 4
Date: 19 December 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editors,

We wish to thank Dr. Erin Strumpf for her third review of our paper. We hope we have adequately answered each of her comments. We have reproduced the reviewer’s comments below in normal font, with our responses in bold.

Kind regards,

Mylaine Breton

Reviewer's report

Title: Who gets a family physician through centralized waiting lists?

Version: 3
Date: 28 November 2014

Reviewer: Erin Strumpf

Reviewer's report:

Minor essential revisions

1. Page 12: “Thus, after the changes to financial incentives in November 2011, a significant increase was observed in the proportion of enrolled patients who were non vulnerable, with a corresponding significant decrease in the proportion of enrolled patients who were vulnerable.”

   Decrease is inconsistent with the preceding text, where you say “the number of vulnerable patients enrolled through GACOs increased only slightly (p <0.001)” and “The increases in both vulnerable and non-vulnerable patients were significant”. Is this a typo?

   This is not a typo. The proportion of overall patients enrolled that were vulnerable decreased as more non-vulnerable patients were enrolled following the change in financial incentives. However, the total volume of enrollments (vulnerable and non-vulnerable) increased. Therefore, although the proportion of enrolled patients who were vulnerable decreased, the absolute number of vulnerable patients enrolled increased slightly.

   We added a phrase in the text to make this clearer:

   “Although, the absolute number of vulnerable patients enrolled slightly increased after the changes to financial incentives in November 2011, a significant decrease in the proportion of enrolled patients who were vulnerable was observed with a corresponding significant increase in the proportion of enrolled patients who were non-vulnerable.” Before the new incentive to enrol non-vulnerable patients was introduced, nearly 70% of patients enrolled through GACOs were vulnerable patients; afterward, the proportion of enrolments of vulnerable patients dropped to 30%.

2. Page 21: “This study showed that a change in financial incentives did not increase the number of vulnerable patients being enrolled with family physicians.” This statement is inconsistent with the results section, where you describe a significant increase in the number of vulnerable patients enrolled through GAGOs after the change in financial incentives. This needs to be fixed.
This was a mistake. We have changed the sentence to ensure consistency with the results section.

“This study showed that a change in financial incentives slightly increased the number of vulnerable patients being enrolled with family physicians and largely increased the number of non-vulnerable patients being enrolled with family physicians.”

3. The discussion surrounding Table 1 is much improved. A few questions and comments remain:
   a. What does “x per period” mean? From the text I conclude you mean “average per period”, but this needs to be clear from the table itself.
      We changed “x per period” to “Average per period” in the table.
   b. You need to add the number of observations from each regression in the table. Based on your last response to reviewer comments, I believe N=65.
      In the first row of the table, we added the observation periods for “before” and “after” as well as the number of observations for both.
   c. Why is the p-value column for the “Priority 1: less than 30 days” row empty?
      We added the p-value. This was an oversight on our part.
   d. The use of decimal points and commas is inconsistent.
      We have made changes to use the decimal point consistently.