Reviewer's report

Title: Does a local financial incentive scheme reduce inequalities in the delivery of clinical care in a socially deprived community? A longitudinal data analysis

Version: 1  Date: 2 February 2015

Reviewer: John Hughes

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This is a well written article. The authors have clearly described the methods used, their conclusion and the study's limitations. The method of analysis is appropriate for the structure of the data.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Table 3

How are 'More deprived practices' and 'Less deprived practices' defined. Is it practices above or below the mean of all practices or is the national average used? How many practices were in each category? The same question arises in Figure 1.

Figure 1

How was 'More' or 'Less' deprived defined? There is no definition of 'More' or 'Less' deprived in the body of the article. Have the authors divided practices above or below the national 'average' or was practice average used?

The number of 'More' and 'Less' deprived practices should be stated in the body of the article and in Figure 1.

The line within the box is presumably the mean but can this be clearly stated. What does each box represents, is it the 95% CI or the inter-quartile range?

Discretionary Revisions - These are recommendations for improvement which the author can choose to ignore.

The authors state that "IMD ... was the focus of this evaluation". However nothing is said about how deprivation is distributed amongst the 83 practices. The range of IMD between 5.6 and 62.3 around the mean of 37.93 suggests that IMD was reasonably symmetrical about the mean but were there a few really deprived practices or many slightly deprived? A little more information about the distribution of IMD scores between practices would help interpretation as would
some indication as to which domain of IMD contributed to a high score.

Table 1

On page 6 the authors state that 'the number of practices participating in the local scheme increased over time'. Can these numbers (N) be shown in head of each column?

Table 5

Can the authors explain in the table why some rows are entirely blank e.g. Weight Management?

Table 6

Would presenting the co-efficient and se for List Size and IMD in scientific notation to the base 10 be preferable and more readable than up to six places of decimals?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.