Reviewer’s report

Title: Compliance with referrals to medical specialist care: patient and general practice determinants: a cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 17 Nov 2015

Reviewer: Hakan Yaman

Reviewer's report:

This interesting people deals on the compliance of patients, which were referred by the GPs to medical specialist services. It covers data retrieved from the GP (PC)database and from the claim (DRG) data. Data from a certain period (2008-2010) were considered and over 48,000 cases.

The research question has been stated clearly, but is not clear why "In order to better understand and improve the referral process, it is necessary to increase knowledge about referral compliance outside the United States." This should be explained. Further explanation on the impact of this study on Dutch health system should be made in the introduction section.

The study is a descriptive study in nature. The approach is appropriate. No controls were needed in the design. The study design, methods and analysis was appropriately studied. The study is innovative and original.

No ethics approval has been retrieved.

Material method section needs to be simplified. It is difficult to follow the methodology. Specific terms like claim data, referral data, DRG or compulsory deductible need to be explained in the text.

The interpretation of the results were well-balanced. Interpretations are overly positive. References have been used in the conclusion section. References have been used appropriately.

Material methods section need to be re-written with clarifications. No additional reviewer needed. Strengths and weaknesses of this paper has been stated in the discussion section.

No ethical and competing interest issue detected.
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.

No

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.

I recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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