Reviewer’s report

Title: An after hours GP clinic in regional Australia: Appropriateness of presentations and impact on local Emergency Department presentations

Version: 0 Date: 26 Apr 2017

Reviewer: Roger Webb

Reviewer’s report:

I found this manuscript to be interesting and well-written throughout. It addresses an important topic concern access to and provision of primary healthcare services. The study was well-designed and the analytical approach is appropriate. The results are clearly presented, and the findings ought to be of interest to readers internationally.

I have a few minor comments and suggestions for the authors, which are as follows:

1) The paper's title makes no mention of the study's assessment of the impact of the provision 'after hours' clinics on rates of non-urgent presentations to the local hospital emergency department. This seems a crucial component of the study, and in my view it really increases its value. It therefore surprises me that the authors haven't mentioned this important element of their work in the paper's title. I would prefer to see it added to the title.

2) It would be helpful if the term 'bulk-billing' could be briefly explained. Intuitively, I have a sense of what it means, but I'm an epidemiologist not a health services researcher, and for other readers like me it would be useful to know exactly what this term means.

3) The study sample consisted of volunteers and, unsurprisingly given the nature of the study, the response rates were rather low. It would be helpful if the authors could explore in more depth the consequences of voluntary participation and low response rate on the representativeness of their study sample. I notice that, in the 'Strengths and limitations' subsection of the Discussion (on page 13), the authors have made the following statement in this regard: "A limitation of this data though is that there was no linkage between the client data and the general practitioner data, therefore we are not able to determine if the participating clients are indeed represented in the general practitioner data." It would be helpful, nonetheless, if the authors could speculate a little on the potential for selection biases in their study.

4) The study was conducted in the small regional town of Bathurst, New South Wales, Australia. I wonder how representative the findings would be to large metropolitan areas where the levels of demand placed on both general practitioners and hospital emergency departments are especially great. Please could the authors also explore this issue in their Discussion section?

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.

Unable to assess

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Yes

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