Author’s response to reviews

Title: The effects of gatekeeping on the quality of primary care in Guangdong Province, China: A cross-sectional study using Primary Care Assessment Tool-Adult Edition

Authors:
Cuiying Liang (liangcy3@mail2.sysu.edu.cn)
Jie Mei (mmjj0926@163.com)
Yuan Liang (331891940@qq.com)
Ruwei Hu (huruwei@mail.sysu.edu.cn)
Li Li (lxl62@case.edu)
Li Kuang (kuangli@mail.sysu.edu.cn)

Version: 3 Date: 11 Jun 2019

Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Thank you very much for your letter concerning our manuscript entitled “The effects of gatekeeping on the quality of primary care in Guangdong Province, China: A cross-sectional study using Primary Care Assessment Tool-Adult Edition” (FAMP-D-18-00318R2). We have resubmitted the manuscript as required. To further process, we responded to the editor point-by-point as detailed below and revised our manuscript accordingly. We greatly appreciate both your help and that of the referees concerning improvement to this paper. I hope that the revised manuscript is now suitable for publication and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Li Kuang, on behalf of all authors

Department of Health Administration
School of Public Health, Sun Yat-Sen University
No.74, Zhongshan Road #2, Guangzhou 510080, CHINA
Tel: 0086-20-87333687
Email: kuangli@mail.sysu.edu.cn
Comments from the editors:

1. Thank you for stating that you obtained verbal informed consent from participants. We ask that you please state reasoning for why verbal consent was obtained and to please state whether the ethics committee approved this form of consent.

Response:

Many thanks for your comments. We have done the pilot test in some community health centres and found that there were a large number of patients on the investigation sites and the patients were in a hurry during the visits. Obtaining written consent from the patients one by one may influence patient flow tendency and disturb the outpatient process. The advantages of the verbal consent are, firstly we can use body language to make it easier to understand and the information is more accurate. Secondly, the mutual communication and feedback is in time. We reported the results of the pilot test and the advantages of the verbal consent to the Institutional Review Board of Sun Yat-sen University. The board reviewed and approved this method of obtaining verbal consent from patients (Methods section, line 176-178, page 9). The board also required that we cannot collect the Protected Health Information used to identify a patient including name, phone numbers, social security numbers, medical record numbers in our questionnaire. We followed the requirements of the Institutional Review Board. We asked for permission and obtained verbal consent from patients before investigation at the sites. We declared that the survey was conducted anonymously and would not influence the patients’ usual visits to general practitioners.