Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 0 Date: 26 Nov 2018

Reviewer: Rosemary Ann Frey

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review an interesting paper on 'The effects of gatekeeping on the quality of primary care'. Overall the paper provides an important contribution to the literature. However in general the paper needs to be grounded further in the international literature. Specific suggestions by section are outlined below:

Abstract

Please provide a brief definition of gatekeeping in the abstract.

All the confounding factors observed between the gatekeeping and non-gatekeeping groups were balanced. The PCAT mean score was a little higher in gatekeeping group (1.98>1.93, p>0.05) but without statistical difference.

I would not begin results with a non-significant finding.

Please limit the use of acronyms in the abstract.

Introduction

Page 3 line 55 "many developed countries have adopt - please correct tense

Page 4 line China announced a healthcare reform plan officially please rephrase to China officially announced a healthcare reform plan

Page 5 Line 88 rephrase to These were both developed cities

Methods

Page 8 Lines 157-158 Those who had very poor physical or mental health, and who had trouble understanding the questionnaire were excluded. Please provide further detail as to what constitutes poor physical or mental health.
Results

Please provide axes labels for figures

Please provide further description for Figure 3

Figure 2 should actually be labelled as a Table. Please provide an appropriate title.

Please provide reliability and validity information for the PCAT-AE

Discussion

Gatekeeping group had lower scores in the domain of accessibility and continuity. Why do you believe this is so?

Page 17 line 344 please provide reference for person-based service model.

There are many explanations for results not based on literature. The discussion would benefit from more reference to international research.

Conclusion needs further elaboration.

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.

Yes

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 am able to assess the statistics

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

**Declaration of competing interests**

Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

'I declare that I have no competing interests'

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license ([http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal