Author's response to reviews

Title: Predicting Inpatient Hospital Payments in the United States: A Retrospective Analysis

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Referee #1

1. Background, page 4, paragraph 3. The word “providers” should be changed to “payers” so that the sentence reads, “Payments form private _payers_ are not publically available. . .”

> We have changed it as recommended.

2. Page 12, paragraph 3. The word Medicaid should be changed to Medicare so that the sentence refers to “the preponderance of people over age 65 in _Medicare_ based on age-related eligibility.”

> We have changed it as recommended.

3. Page 13, paragraph 3. The amount $1,119 is missing the dollar sign.

> We have added the dollar sign.

4. Page 20, paragraph 2. It is stated that the study by White revealed that hospitals appear to reduce operating costs in response to Medicare prices. Something is missing here. Do the authors mean that they reduce costs in response to Medicare _prices cuts_?

> We have changed it to “Medicare payment cuts.”

5. Background, page 5, paragraph 3. Strictly speaking, states don’t provide the requisition financial data, they require hospitals provide it. Thus, only 10 of the 46 states contribution to HUCP “require hospitals to report payments.”

> We have retained the original phrasing because it is the decision of the state data organization that affects HCUP. Even if hospitals in a state gave such financial data to the state organization, if that organization refused to pass it along then HCUP would not have it.

6. Page 15, first paragraph. It is stated that the HHI had a significant association with “stays paid.” Do the authors mean that the PCR?

> We have rephrased it as “with the PCR for all payer categories except self-pay.”
7. The sentence “in sample RMSE was low than the out of sample RMSE in most cases, as expected,” is not needed.

> We have retained the sentence for completeness.

8. Table 2 has the number of observations as the first row and again as the last row of the table. One of these could be eliminated.

> We have deleted the last row.

Referee #2 did not request changes.