Reviewer’s report

Title: Patients' perceptions of interactions with hospital staff are associated with hospital readmissions: A national survey of 4535 hospitals

Version: 1 Date: 02 Dec 2017

Reviewer: Gregor Stiglic

Reviewer's report:

Hospital readmissions are recently a widely researched topic and represent an important to obtain an insight into the measurable variables that could be related to hospital readmissions.

In this study, authors observe the patient's perceptions of the responsiveness of the hospital staff and communication and build multivariate regression models to predict 30-day readmission rates at the hospital level in the US hospitals.

Since we know that re-admission rates change over time, especially after the introduction of The Readmission Reductions Program by CMS, it would be interesting to see the predictive value of patient's experience on readmission rates. Authors should at least discuss about the technical possibilities to build predictive instead of only cross-sectional descriptive models. It would also make sense to include additional variables included in the Hospital Compare.

The three questions used in the study are not the only questions related to patient's perceptions of communication. It should be explained why for example questions on "Communication about medicine", "Discharge information" or "Care transition" were not included in this study. Furthermore, these are "composite topics" represented by multiple questions where it would be possible to study the relations even further. For example, staff responsiveness was derived from two questions - what is their correlation to readmission rates?

Additionally, analysis of summary data only presents a serious limitation of this study as it does not allow stratification of patients into at least age groups and/or gender groups.

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:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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