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: 11 Dec 2017

Reviewer: Marsha Regenstein

Reviewer's report:

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I enjoyed reading the paper. The revisions made by the authors improve the paper quite a bit. I noticed a few times in the text where additional editing is necessary but the paper reads mostly quite well.

I agree with some comments from the previous reviewers about what we can take away from the findings. I think the results stand on their own -- the fact is that HCAHPS is commonly used and it's not clear theoretically or conceptually what the underlying link is between the measures and health care utilization or patient outcomes. The authors take a stab at explaining the findings in the context of hospital care and possible connections to readmission rates. The discussion makes sense but it leaves the reader somewhat unsatisfied -- though I don't think this is the fault of the authors or the analysis. Why wouldn't communication between patients and nurses/physicians be associated with better or worse readmission rates? Would the findings be essentially the same if the analysis looked at the lowest, and not the highest, box?

In general, though, this is an interesting article that is well done and clear and will add to the literature on hospital readmissions and potential areas for targeted improvement efforts.

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?
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