Author’s response to reviews

Title: Effect of a typical systemic hospital reform on inpatient expenditure for rural population: the Sanming model in China

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Author’s response to reviews:

February 21, 2019

Dear Dr Maria Elisabeth Johanna Zalm and Dr Helen Roberton,

Thank you very much for your letter of informing us that our article is potentially acceptable for publication in BMC Health Services Research, and we are very grateful to you and the reviewer for the valuable suggestions to our manuscript "Effect of a typical systemic hospital reform on inpatient expenditure for rural population: the Sanming model in China" (BHSR-D-18-01894).

We have revised the article according to the suggestions of you and the reviewer. The main changes to the manuscript are indicated in the text by using track changes.

All authors have read and approved the revised manuscript, and there are no financial or other relations that could lead to a conflict of interest.

If you have any further question or any suggestion about our revised manuscript, please contact me. Once again we are very grateful for your input.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Huazhang Wu
Response to the reviewers’ comments:

1. Although the authors added length of stay as an outcome, they didn't revise the manuscript thoroughly to reflect it. For example, in the abstract, they only mentioned the financial burden in the background. They didn't update the results of OOP with the exclusion of LOS from the model. Therefore, the authors need to carefully revise the paper to reflect that LOS is another outcome in the study.

Response: Thanks for the reviewers’ comments. It is valuable. We revised the manuscript thoroughly to reflect that LOS is an outcome in the revised article. (For example, in the abstract: Page2, line31-33; Page3, line47-48). We updated the results of OOP with the exclusion of LOS from the model in 'Abstract' (Page3, line46) and in the 'Results' section (Page11, line242).

2. Abstract, methods. The authors didn't mention the fixed effects, clustering effects, and robustness check.

Response: We appreciate the suggestion. We added the information about the fixed effects, clustering effects, and robustness check in 'Abstract' (Page2, line41-42) and we moved some information about the fixed effects, clustering effects, and robustness check in the 'Results' section to the 'Methods' section (Page10, line205-212).

3. Line 171, length of stay is no longer the co-variate. Please remove it.

Response: Thanks for the suggestion. We removed it (Page8, line171).

4. Line 234, since length of stay was removed from the co-variate, the results should be different.

Response: Thanks for the suggestion. We updated the results with the exclusion of length of stay from the co-variate (Page11, line242).

5. Line 245. remove ""robust"

Response: Thanks for the suggestion. We removed ""robust"". (Page10, line205).

6. Results section should mention the specific numbers in the tables.
Response: Thanks for the suggestion. We added some specific numbers in the tables for the main results of our study in the 'Results' section (Page11, line235; Page12, line243-250; Page12, line260).

7. Table 3 & 4 have different fonts.

Response: Thanks for the suggestion. Table 3 and Table 4 have the same fonts in the revised article.