Reviewer’s report

Title: What will make a difference? Assessing the impact of policy and non-policy scenarios on estimations of the future GP workforce

Version: 1 Date: 04 May 2017

Reviewer: Lud Van Der Velden

Reviewer's report:

General remarks

I'm pleased with the way the authors dealt with my remarks and the remarks of the other reviewers. The article has substantially changed for the better. However, I'm not an economist and I cannot really evaluate whether the cost analysis was done in a proper manner.

Concerning the cost analysis:

I wondered whether for the costs of IMG’s, the length of their stay was taking into account. Recruitment of 1 IMG is valued at a cost of about AUD$ 30.000. Training of 1 GP is valued at a cost of about AUD$ 50.000 per year. I presume that with a three year training program, training 1 GP will cost about AUD$ 150.000. Recruiting 1 IMG for AUD$ 30.000 would then of course be far cheaper then training 1 GP for AUD$ 150.000. But retention of the IMG's will probably be lower than for the domestic GPs. If the IMG will only stay for 5 years and a domestic GP for 30 years, then the costs for IMG's will on the long run be bigger than working with domestic GPs.

Specific remarks

Main text:

Page 9, ± line 28: "… an increase medical places, enabling an increasing the number …" should probably be "… an increase in medical places, enabling an increasing number …".

Page 15, ± line 35: "… assumed that there no additional …" should probably be "…assumed that no additional …".
Page 17, ± line 6: Although I did not understand this sentence, I presume there is a logic reason for discounting. I read in reference [27] that this is standard practice for any economic
evaluation. Could, for non-economists like me, the reason be mentioned? Is it, for instance, to account for future inflation?

Page 18, ± line 36: "… Figures 2 and 3." should probably be "… Figure 2."

Page 20, ± line 51: "… Figures 2 …" should probably be "… Figures 3 …".

Page 28, ± line 43: "… 2025, …" should probably be "… 2015, …" (see scenario 6 in table 1).

Page 28, ± line 45: I did not understand "… over the nine years.". Where do these 9 years come from? According to table 1, this policy would be running from 2015 until 2033, i.e. 18 years.

Page 30, ± line 18: A specific reference is missing.

Page 30, ± line 28: "… there is a lack sufficient …" should probably be "… there is a lack of sufficient …".

Page 32, ± line 16: "… of different the consultations …" should probably be "… of different consultations …".

Page 32, ± line 23: "A mosre detailed …" should probably be "A more detailed …".

Table 4

I would like to see the addition of the policy scenario "Increased role substitution + Reduced IMG recruitment (single scenarios 4+8)" as the 17-th scenario. This 17-th scenario is already present in table 5, so it would be good to present it also in table 4.

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