

Article details: 2021-0194

Title: Sociodemographic characteristics and emergency department visits and inpatient hospitalizations for atopic dermatitis in Ontario: a cross-sectional study

Authors: Aaron M. Drucker MD ScM, Li Bai PhD, Lihi Eder MD PhD, An-Wen Chan MD DPhil, Elena Pope MD MSc, Karen Tu MD MSc, Liisa Jaakkimainen MD MSc

Reviewer 1

General comments (author response in bold)

Sound and well described methodology with appropriate analysis of the results.

Appropriately limited speculation with regards findings.

Thank you for reviewing our manuscript. We appreciate your positive comments.

Reviewer 2

General comments (author response in bold)

This manuscript by Drucker et al. examines the relationship between local dermatologist density and emergency department visits for atopic dermatitis. In my review of the literature, I was surprised that this issue had not been addressed at some point already by other studies. Like the authors, I was not expecting that higher dermatologist density would be associated with a higher rate of ED visits for atopic dermatitis. The authors have accounted for several variables that have already been well-studied in other publications addressing ED usage. I was very surprised by several findings in the paper, including the relatively low number of visits for atopic dermatitis patients with dermatologists and the fact that patients with atopic dermatitis were able to access their primary care physician on average for eight visits per year. With regards to atopic dermatitis, I think this manuscript has a lot of information that should be known to people who are making policies regarding both dermatologist density and also dermatologists in Ontario who treat atopic dermatitis.

Overall, this paper does a solid job of presenting the data in an unbiased way. The findings are very interesting and relevant and prompt me to consider examining the same question in our own community. I rarely recommend acceptance without revision, but in this case I don't think there is anything else to add that would change the impact of the findings. Hopefully these findings will stimulate further research that addresses why patient behaviors and/or the health care system result in this unexpected finding of higher ED use for atopic dermatitis in areas of higher dermatologist density.

Thank you for reviewing our manuscript. We appreciate your positive comments.