Appendix 2 (as supplied by the authors): Summary of confounder, mediator and collider paths based on the hypothetical Directed Acyclic Graph in Figure 1 on the effect of transitional care (exposure) on ED visits (outcome)

Path*	Type of association	Status of adjusted* variable	Effect of adjustment
"transitional care" ← ["comorbidity"] → "ED visits"	Non-causal	"Comorbidity" is a common cause of the exposure and outcome, i.e. a confounder	Confounding correctly blocked by adjusting for "comorbidity"
"transitional care" → ["continuity of care"] → "ED visits"	Causal	"Continuity of care" is on the causal pathway between exposure and outcome, i.e. a mediator	Part of the effect of exposure on outcome erroneously blocked by adjusting for "continuity of care"
"transitional care" → ["patient satisfaction"] ← "beliefs/values" → "ED visits"	Non-causal	"Patient satisfaction" is a common effect of exposure and of a predictor of the outcome, i.e. a collider	Spurious association between exposure and outcome erroneously created by adjusting for "patient satisfaction"
Footnote: ED: Emergency Department. *Brackets around a variable indicate adjustment. Arrows represent causal associations between variables.			