Reviewer's report

Title: Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) over-triage and the financial implications for major trauma centres in NSW, Australia

Version: 2 Date: 15 March 2013

Reviewer: Bryan Bledsoe

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Abstract:

The following statement remains in the abstract: “HEMS over-triage was estimated based on injury severity (including two thresholds: ISS#12 or #15) and hospital length of stay (LOS<24hrs).” It is just as confusing now as it was with the original paper. What is the difference between an ISS less than 12 and an ISS less than 15? It just does not make any sense. In terms of the hospital length of stay, it is a yes or no answer. Was the length of stay less than 24 hours or greater than 24 hours? The term “hospital length of stay” does not make sense.

My original query remains unanswered. “Page 2 (Abstract) “HEMS over-triage was estimated based on injury severity (ISS#12 or #15) and hospital length of stay (LOS<24hrs).” This does not make sense. The American College of Surgeons lists minor injuries as ISS < 15. How can you have both # 12 and # 15?”

On page 7 the authors use the following confusing statement, “we used the local definition of minor to moderate injury (ISS#12) as well as more generally used criteria in the HEMS literature (ISS#15 [18]). As the suitability of the ISS>15 threshold to represent major trauma remains controversial.” The obvious question is what happens to patients within ISS less than 12? Are they included in the ISS lesson 12 group or the assess lesson 15 group. Later in the same part of the paper they use mean ISS. This is very confusing and lacks consistency.

I can't find a single change in the manuscript based upon my first review.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.