Reviewer's report

Title: Consensus on items and quantities of clinical equipment required to deal with a mass casualties big bang incident: results of a national Delphi study.

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Reviewer: Ebbe Billmann B Thorgersen

Reviewer's report:

The study “Consensus on items and quantities of clinical equipment required to deal with a mass casualties big bang incident: results of a national Delphi study” is important in its field. Guidelines on equipment and/or national standards in prehospital trauma care would be of great help, both in terms of securing the optimal items in need, to have the optimal amount of equipment to deal with a mass casualty incident, and to plan economy etc.

The study seems thorough, well conducted and well written.

Major compulsory revisions

- In such a demanding study over three rounds, compliance will suffer. A total loss of 47% of the participants may be too much. The authors should discuss this problem more thorough. What can be done to avoid it? Is the study scheme unrealistic? Could it be simplified?
- 54% of the items reached consensus in the study. Would it be as good to flip a coin? What do the authors want to do with the other items that did not reach consensus? The authors should more clearly state what consequences a study like this should have in terms of choice of equipment.

Minor essential revisions

- Confusion between the sections (not Discussion in Results etc) E.g. the “Consensus” part on page 9, should preferably be moved and integrated in Discussion. The same goes for “Analysis plan”, which with some modifications is better suited for “Discussion”. In general, the authors should carefully dissect the Results part and strictly keep to the actual results and discuss the data in Discussion.
- Discussion is too short; please include the suggested modifications above.
- In comparison, M&M and Results are too long, see above.
- Tables, no vertical lines should be included.
- Title- too long. In particular, the phrase “mass casualty big bang incident”. Although the term is in use, a simpler and in my opinion, better term is “mass casualty incident” (MCI)
- Don’t use quotes in-text, e.g the quote from the London bombing in
Background/Introduction. Explain the message and then provide the complementary reference
- write out the hypothesis and don’t mark it with numbers (final section of Introduction)
- Sections: In particular, M&M section could be structured better, for reader-friendliness
- the authors should state if they think the equipment should be used/stored, that did not reach consensus. And if not, what is the point of such a study?

Discretionary revisions
- explain each term, with short term, on first encounter in-text. Then use the short term. E.g. NHS and National Health Service
- no need to point out where tables should be inserted in the manuscript
Mid page 5, the internet reference should be converted to a common reference

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

No competing interests