Reviewer's report

Title: A New Implicit Review Instrument for Measuring Quality of Care Delivered in the Emergency Department

Version: 2 Date: 5 February 2007

Reviewer: Susan Bratton

Reviewer's report:

General
The authors from the University of CA Davis present a review instrument for measuring quality of care in the emergency department for children. They validated it in rural CA emergency departments and used medication errors as an external validation. The paper is well written and performs well in this setting. The authors report almost a quarter of patients with medications written, had errors- a very high rate. It makes one wonder if the instrument would perform as well in the setting of fewer errors.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
In the abstract, under results, the 95% CI was confusing. I think the point is made with the written text and I suggest that you omit the numbers as they are devised by the scale that the reader has not read in the text when they are reading the abstract.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

page 11, the first paragraph, the discussion oabout the ICC with between and within subjects mean square is a bit pedantic and reads like a textbook. I suggest that you use the reference and delete the written discussion from, "The ISS is a function of...within subject mean squares (26). Just leave the reference with "Because the purpose of the instrument was...." (26)

Discussion, the paragraph about medication errors. The errors may have been higher because of less pediatric experience or because the emergency department was not staffed by emergency medicine trained physicians.

The authors discuss that the review was validated in rural underserved emergency departments in CA. It is unclear how it would perform elsewhere and certainly if the number of medication errors were lower, then this external validation would be more difficult to demonstrate.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.