Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Validation of colorectal cancer surgery data from administrative data sources

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 7 March 2012

**Reviewer:** Rodney Sparapani

**Reviewer’s report:**

- **Major Compulsory Revisions**
  1. Validation is an important part of clinical research with administrative data banks. The authors should be commended for pointing this out in several places throughout the manuscript and performing this critical task. However, the purpose of this particular validation could use some elaboration. I kept waiting for the other shoe to drop. At no point do the authors give the reader either a concrete or a hypothetical reason why they want them to read this except, perhaps, validation for its own sake.

- **Minor Essential Revisions**
  2. Methods, first paragraph: sub-heading is “Inclusion Criteria”, but the second sentence begins with “Patients were excluded …”. Also, the exclusion for “histology that could not be staged” gives the impression that only staged patients remain in the study. However, Table 1 appears to contradict that assumption.

  3. Methods, second paragraph: you are missing one A in what should be abbreviated as NAACCR.

**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:**

I declare that I have no competing interests