Reviewer’s report

Title: A markov model to evaluate hospital readmission

Version: 1 Date: 19 March 2008

Reviewer: Luigi Franciosi

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions:
I have no major revisions suggested. I believe the authors have rightly brought forward the use of Markov modelling as tool for investigating disease progression in COPD. However, as always, it is important to remember that the model itself is dependent on the assumptions made by the modeller and the type of historical data used to build the model. Hence, the model may or may not be relevant to clinical practice or research setting in COPD, either today or in the future. Hence, I would suggest to the authors to explicitly indicate their underlying model assumptions before model development in the methods sections and then explain in the discussion section how much these assumptions may have been violated as the model was developed using the patient data available. It enables the reader to understand if the authors have attempted to refine and validate their model.

Minor Essential Revisions:
Although I find the manuscript to be written adequately, I would ask the authors to please have a native-English speaker or medical writer review the grammar and other word usage presented in this manuscript. I find sometimes a mix of English and Italian words, for example, the title of Table 4 uses ‘e’ to imply ‘and’. Please correct.

Discretionary Revisions.
None.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.