Reviewer’s report

Title: External review and validation of the Swedish national inpatient register

Version: 1 Date: 24 January 2011

Reviewer: Grete Moth

Reviewer’s report:

Overall a very interesting topic and absolutely relevant for the increasing number of researchers that make us of this valuable source of data that these registries form in the Scandinavian countries.

The paper has been shortened. However, I think that it still needs to be structured better and to be shortened further. I will try to be very specific concerning the structure and mention some examples below.

Major compulsory revisions

The abstract is structured with the typical headlines. So should the main document be structured with the same headlines and with the suitable content in every paragraph (Background, Methods, and so on).

The purpose of the paper is stated after only four lines of background. It should be put at the end of this paragraph. Think of the background as a funnel with the wide perspective that along with the text tightens in, and at the end almost points at the need for this particular study.

Therefore, the second paragraph starting with “Systematic collection...” would be relevant to put just before mentioning the purpose of the study at the end of Background.

The paragraph starting with the headline “Other health registers than the IPR” might be more suitably placed in the Discussion.

The paragraph about Regulations may be of only little significant international relevance. It might be shortened to only include the sentence starting with “It is mandatory for all physicians....” as this is relevant information.

There is quite a lot of redundancy in” History of the IPR” and “Coverage” - could be shortened or combined.

The paragraph “Assessment of the diagnostic quality of the IPR”- is this meant to be the methods?

It is very unclear where Results start as there is no paragraph with this notation?? In general, it is very hard to tell about some of the text if the information provided is background information or results of the present study. This has to be made clear. An example of this is confusion whether the paragraphs “Assessment by the NBHW” and “National quality Registers” are background information or results?

There is still a large number of figures and tables – it may be relent to make a
selection and include only the very relevant.

Minor essential revisions

In the paragraph in a parenthesis: the C reports and D reports – this is confusing and makes sense only to people who know about in advance – should be excluded.

The PIN is mentioned the first time in “the history of the IPR” without explanation.

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