Reviewer's report

Title: Waiting for elective general surgery: impact on health related quality of life and psychosocial consequences.

Version: 1 Date: 17 November 2006

Reviewer: Mats Lundström

Reviewer's report:

General
In my opinion this manuscript is very well written and the subject is important.

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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)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

1. In purpose and conclusion there are no comments about comparing the three diseases. In results however many comments are about statistical significant differences between the three patient groups. If there was no purpose to compare these three diseases and make priority recommendations between the surgical procedures I can't see any reason for making comments about statistical differences in estimated anxiety or whatever. The postoperative results are based on 20% of the original patient groups and we don't know if the postoperative questionnaire responders are different for different diseases.

2. In the result section, 2nd paragraph I would recommend to add “Data not shown” in the end (page 9, line 12).

3. Table 5 could use more explanations. How shall Odds ratio be interpreted when one makes a multilevel logistic regression analysis on the association etc. Why p and not 95% CI?

4. Appendix A shows items in the homemade questionnaire about negative emotional reactions. Some items seem very much alike and are probably redundant. Have other psychometric tests been performed except Cronbach’s alfa on this questionnaire? The questionnaire seems to overestimate negative emotional reactions. I recommend a comment about being careful when you interpret not fully validated questionnaires.

5. The non responders are analysed reasonably good, but as far as I understand only those who were eligible but not participating. One may wonder if there were any differences between those who answered the postoperative questionnaire and those who did not. In pre-op EQ-5D answers in Table 4?

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