Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 1 March 2007

Reviewer: Takeo Nakayama

Reviewer's report:

General

This is an interesting report on the "waiting list" problem and will extend the insight about it. Some revisions and additional description will make this manuscript more suitable for acceptance.

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

1. It is necessary to make a brief explanation about the general system of the "waiting list" in Netherlands. This system must be somewhat different from those of the other countries. Is it possible to change the order when health status of a waiting patient worsens?

2. Why are the three diseases chosen for this study? Is it impossible to examine the cases of the other diseases?

3. Approximately 25% of the respondents to the preoperative survey failed to participate in the postoperative one. How about the consequences of this bias?

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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)

1. In Table 1, show the initial response rate in the column of percent. For example, it is preferable to show "40.5" instead of "100".

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

1. Concerning the three diseases examined, is there any common rule for surgical indication? Is general tendency of surgeons for early operation in the Netherlands positive or discretion? Are general patients active in making a decision of undertaking operation?

2. When are the waiting patients informed of the exact date of operation?

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.