Reviewer's report

Title: Mortality as an indicator of patient safety in orthopaedics: lessons from qualitative analysis of a database of medical errors

Version: 1 Date: 8 December 2011

Reviewer: Peter Pilot

Reviewer's report:

REPORT

----------------

Re: 'Mortality as an indicator of patient safety in orthopaedics: lessons from qualitative analysis of a database of medical errors'

Sukhmeet S Panesar, Andrew Carson-Stevens, Bhupinder S Mann, Mohit Bhandari and Rajan Madhok BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders Research article

Reviewer's report

-------------

Please number your comments and divide them into

- Major Compulsory Revisions

The author must respond to these before a decision on publication can be reached. For example, additional necessary experiments or controls, statistical mistakes, errors in interpretation.

- Minor Essential Revisions

The author can be trusted to make these. For example, missing labels on figures, the wrong use of a term, spelling mistakes.

Abstract: 1st line: suggest: A total of 257… instead of 257 in full in summary

Background:

Second paragraph: Suggestion: Could you give an estimation of the total amount of procedures so the reader gets insight on the percentage of incidents (feeling about over/under reporting).

Results: mean inter-rater reliability is mentioned, but I see no explanation/discussion about it in the discussion section.

Surgical journey: miss some more explanation about the incidents with to less info. Want more info about this.

Causes of death, second part of paragraph: Or figure or list, not both.

Discussion:
- Start with summarizing your general findings, then in second paragraph start with specific items
- Large part to start with about SSI, but is the 5th and 6th paragraph, not of more interest?
- 5th paragraph (Our study highlights…) Starts well, but I miss recommendations, instead it continuous with examples?
- Paragraph, one other key finding…. Weak paragraph. To my opinion, the real issue is about issues that need to be addressed, not what is already done
- Limitations of study, which limitations has current registration for the study? Which needs to be changed?

Conclusion:
- Very weak. Nice manuscript, with very important work, but see nothing of this in conclusion? What did they find to make improvements? The conclusion need to be strong and about their reseach.

In general: well written manuscript, however the discussion is to weak. The authors need to address more what the studied.

What next?
---------

Based on your assessment of the validity of the manuscript, what do you advise should be the next step?

- Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions (With better discussion and some minor points, Accept!)

Level of interest
-----------------
- An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
--------------------------

Well written

Statistical review
------------------

N.a.

Declaration of competing interests
-----------------------------------

Besides hospital employed,
I have a direct relationship with a medical device industry (Biomet BU manager clinical)
No relation to this paper

Open peer review
-------------

Submission of this report is taken as confirmation that you are happy for your signed report to be posted on the BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders website as part of the pre-publication history of this article.

**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.