Reviewer’s report

Title: Health care consumption and costs due to foot and ankle injuries in the Netherlands, 1986-2010

Version: 3 Date: 1 February 2014

Reviewer: Jill Halstead

Reviewer’s report:

The research is interesting and highly relevant to clinicians and academics. The authors have presented the data in a well written and clearly defined paper.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Background
Please expand on the term (pre) clinical trauma in the background paragraph 1, line 1.
Using a parenthesis is a little confusing – please qualify.
Has clinical care prior to / and / or following trauma improved?

Methods
Paragraph 2 sentence 1,
To define the injuries for hospitalised patients as the International Classification of Diseases 10th revision.
Please also elaborate on how these injuries were defined (case ascertainment).
Please clarify if X-rays were used to define osseous injuries in the foot or ankle.
Please clarify if the method to classify foot and ankle injuries has changed in the time frame of the analysis.

Methods
Paragraph 2 sentence 1
“Injuries in non-hospitalized patients (LIS) were defined using injury type descriptions.”
Please elaborate on the classification and description of injuries for non-hospitalised patients.
Please clarify if X-rays were used to define osseous injuries in the foot or ankle.
Please clarify if the method to classify foot and ankle injuries has changed in the time frame of the analysis.

Discussion
Paragraph 2 line 1
Please qualify this sentence and alter it to ... “This study shows the reduction in emergency attendance over time is mainly attributable to a decrease in clinically observed ligamentary ankle injuries.”

Unless the Authors can show all attending patients has an MRI to confirm ligament damage.

Discussion
Paragraph 4
Please re-phrase this paragraph, it appears conflicted.
The increase in foot and ankle injuries is not conflicted by your results as your data is limited to hospital attendance and admissions. You explained this by referencing the GP records in paragraph 2 and explaining the out-of-hours GP service. I would re-phase this to say the profile and presentation of ED injuries has altered and the increase in osseous injuries may be proportional to the increase seen in all lower limb injuries.

Minor Essential Revisions

Abstract
HLOS abbreviation - please write in full before using the abbreviation.

Methods
Paragraph 2 sentence 1, to define the injuries for hospitalised patients as the International Classification of Diseases 10th revision – please reference this.

Discretionary Revisions
None

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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