Reviewer’s report

Title: A Diagnostic Support Tool for Lumbar Spinal Stenosis - A self-administered, self-reported history questionnaire

Version: 2 Date: 24 May 2007

Reviewer: Jens Ivar Brox

Reviewer’s report:

General

The study is large, well designed and of clinical interest. The manuscript is clearly written. As discussed by the authors the lack of golden standard may represent a problem for the validity of results, but the use of an expert panel is acceptable.

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

A more detailed description of results from the physical examination with OR, CI and p-values and more detailed descriptions of the patient samples are informative.

Why was logistic regression and multivariate models not used?

Most of page 10-11 should be described in the methods section.

Please give the number of patients in tables 4 and 5.

Please replace figure 4 with an Altman agreement plot.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Cauda equina syndrome is used for a spinal disorder that requires urgent surgery. The author should probably describe that the cauda equina type spinal stenosis is distinct from the cauda equina syndrome?

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential 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.