Reviewer's report

Title: Effectiveness of accelerated perioperative care and rehabilitation intervention compared to current intervention after hip and knee arthroplasty A before-after trial of 258 patients with a 3-month follow-up

Version: 1 Date: 16 January 2008

Reviewer: Henrik Husted

Reviewer's report:

An important and well-written article on a hot topic.

I have some questions/comments:

1) Minor: There are a few misspellings, which should be corrected.
2) Minor: table 2: p-values should be included.
3) Major: why are uni-knees included? They do not appear in both groups and in my opinion only make "noise", as these patients are expected to have shorter LOS. They should be excluded.
4) Minor: Breakthrough series collaborative model - reference?
5) Major: why is there a difference in the Hawthorne effect in the two studies - explain?
6) Major: was the discharge criteria identical between groups? Why is knee flexion above 90 degrees necessary for discharge?
7) Major: was the pain treatment identical? Why was Oxycontin (a long lasting opioid) used for acute pain? This is suboptimal in my opinion compared to the instant-acting drugs...Include doses, was VAS used - and if so, what triggered supplementary opioids?
8) Major: how was LOS counted? Some patients were admitted the day before surgery (conventional group), does this count as one day?
9) Major: the section on the implementation method could and should be shortened, it is too long and too confusing as it stands.
10) Major: how often were the patients tested against discharge criteria - once daily, morning, evening?
11) Major: discuss (and reference) patient characteristics which may influence LOS
12) Minor: Section on Length of stay: the first sentence is impossible to understand (for me), please clarify.
13) Minor: page 14, "We were a little surprised...", please rephrase

These issues should be addressed and revised, after which the article could be published.
**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:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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'