Reviewer's report

Title: A low cost project in a cold economic climate. Operating room data management: improving efficiency and safety in a surgical block.

Version: 5 Date: 29 November 2012

Reviewer: Alex Macario

Reviewer's report:

please consider deleting
A low cost project in a cold economic climate.
from title as it may confuse the reader unnecessarily

In abstract please:
1) be more specific with actual number (or %) of unscheduled procedures performed has been reduced while maintaining the same percentage of surgical procedures.
2) The number of overtime events decreased in 2010 and in 2011 compared to 2009 and the delays expressed in minutes are almost the same. Again please give actual measurements.
3) A direct link was found between the complexity of surgical procedures, the number of unscheduled procedures and overtime. Despite a consistency in the complexity of procedures, surgical groups have been successful in reducing the number of unscheduled procedures and overtime. For both these statements please give precise measurements to support this.

In methods:
please define raw utilization as measured in this study

Please consider moving following paragraph from methods to Discussion.
The set up costs for the SPP (DRS + ORMS) system can be broken down into “start-up costs” and “management costs”. Start-up costs include: 1 PDA for each OR (8) and 2 PDA as replacement back up: a total of 10 Personal Digital Assistant (PDA), each costing 1.400€, software and staff training which amounted to 5.000€. The annual costs for the management of the system are 30% of 25000€ = 7500€ (25.000 is the annual salary of the data manager), Software Upgrade 600€ (1 day per year). The real value of SPP can be attributed to its inherent financial sustainability and process sustainability. ORB comprises 8 operating rooms, 3 anesthetic rooms and 1 recovery room. Approximately 5500 surgical procedures are carried out every year and the total cost of the surgical process in ORB is about 6.800.000€ per year. The relationship between the cost of ORMS (13.100€ = 7.500 + 5.000 + 600) and the cost of the total process (6.800.00 0€) is equal to 0.0019% (13.375 † 6.800.000). The annual cost of SPP
is 0.0019% of the annual cost of the surgical process: it is a low
cost project in the truest sense. Although many professionals involved were able
to express their opinion on the project during a series of meetings, no OR
Personnel Survey was created or submitted to personnel in order to assess how
well OR suites are functioning.

Figure 2 looks like a free advertisement for Oracle is this really necessary?
please delete

language corrections please:
probable lacuna in legislation??

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely
related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being
published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the
statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests