Reviewer's report

Title: The Role of Surgical Audit in Improving Patient Management; Nasal Haemorrhage: An Audit Study

Version: Date: 19 June 2007

Reviewer: Jan Van der Meulen

Reviewer's report:

General

I'd like to commend the authors for this short paper that aims to describe the effects of a change in guidelines for the treatment of epistaxis in an A&E Department. It is potentially an example of how carefully devised changes in local guidelines can have a considerable impact on the use of hospital beds without impinging on the quality of care.

It is unfortunate that this simple message is not very well conveyed in the submitted manuscript.

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

This manuscript is not easy to digest for a number of reasons. First, the methods and results are poorly presented. The focus of both these sections should be on the before after study setting out how what the outcomes were and how they were compared. In its current form, the manuscript contains too much clinical detail which obfuscates the main results. Second, I expected to find explicit information about the number of readmissions in patients sent home. This information is absent or alternatively so poorly presented that the reader has to do a lot of guess work. The statistical analysis should be limited to the number / percentage of patients sent home before and after the introduction of the guideline and of those that experienced a readmission or an other untowards event/complication. Third, the manuscript should provide more information about how the analysis was carried out and less information about the statistical results (no need to report degrees of freedom and the chi squared statistics; p-values will do). Fourth, the Discussion should highlight the key results, the methodological limitation, comparisons with other studies (if relevant) and the clinical implications. Now, it presents a large number of clinical observations most of which are irrelevant in this context in no particular order.

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

Table 1 needs information about the number of patients included.

Figures 1 and 2 do not seem to add any information over and above the information that is already in the text.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

None.

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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