Reviewer's report

**Title:** University hospitals as drivers of career success: An empirical study of the duration of promotion and promotion success of hospital physicians

**Version:** 3

**Date:** 6 January 2014

**Reviewer:** Freedom Nkhululeko Gumedze

**Reviewer's report:**

- **Major Compulsory Revisions**

  1. On pages 2 and 6 (Abstract and Statistical analysis and methods) survival analysis is mentioned as the method of analysis, and yet the data were analysed using logistic regression models. This is misleading.

  2. More efficient analyses would have been separate survival analysis of (i) time from physician to senior physician and (ii) the time to promotion to a chief physician position. In both cases physicians not promoted to senior physicians, and senior physicians not promoted to chief physician during the study would be censored.

  3. The analysis of the durations of promotions using t-tests for dependent samples assumes the durations are normally distributed. This assumption needs to be verified otherwise the comparisons should be in terms of median durations.

- **Minor Essential Revisions**

  1. Table 1: For categorical variables both frequencies and percentages should be reported.

  2. Table 1: Replace Age with Age (years)

  3. Tables 2: Replace n.s. with the actual p-value.

  4. Table 3: Delete row for constant term.

  5. Table 3: Justify the need to the term Time in rank squared. How should the coefficient for this term be interpreted?

  6. Table 4: Delete row for constant term.

  7. Tables 3 and 4: What is the reference category for the term Gender?

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.