Reviewer's report

Title: A critical evaluation of the electronic surgical logbook

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Reviewer: Kenneth Lindsay

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1. The Title of this paper is slightly misleading since it is in fact a validation of some of the data entered into this electronic logbook rather than a critical evaluation of the pros and cons of collecting the data electronically.

2. The validation is only partial in that it examines the recorded hospital, the recorded consultant and the trainees submitting data for one region in the UK (Yorkshire). There has been no attempt to validate the trainees entries, i.e., the operation performed and the level of supervision.

3. The paper needs to describe more clearly the information recorded in the database. Is everything included in Figure 1? Is the “level of supervision” described in terms of surgeons scrubbed, surgeon un-scrubbed etc?

4. The sections in the discussion sub-titled “hospitals”, “consultants”, “trainees” and “logbook fields” should be incorporated in the results rather than in the discussion.

5. The paper states that 2 trainees submitted logbook experience but were on “out of programme study leave”. The duration of study leave is not stated but would only be relevant if this lasted more than a few weeks.

CONCLUSIONS:

Despite the above, the paper is useful in highlighting deficiencies in this electronic logbook namely the absence of a default list of hospitals and consultants and the inclusion of unnecessary fields. I feel that it warrants acceptance provided the above points (3 – 5) are addressed.