Reviewer's report

Title: A straightforward approach to designing a scoring system for predicting length-of-stay of cardiac surgery patients

Version: 4  Date: 26 November 2013

Reviewer: Thomas L Higgins

Reviewer's report:

The authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions. The title better reflects the content, and the introduction reads better with moving background information into the discussion. Thank you for adding the Kramer reference. The graphic representation tells the story for sensitivity and specificity as a function of prior probabilities.

Minor, optional points: page 2: "tune to other centers" - this is somewhat colloquial, and "customize for other centers" might be preferable. There are two other instances of using "tune" in the document that could optionally be changed.

Thank you for the thoughtful revisions. As a result, I think the paper reads much better.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I do not believe I have any conflicts of interest.

For full disclosure, I have served as a consultant to Cerner, which markets the APACHE system, which has modules for length-of-stay prediction, but I do not see this in any way competing with Cerner, or affecting their finances.