Reviewer's report

Title: Exploring types of focused factories in hospital care: a case study approach

Version: 1 Date: 12 July 2009

Reviewer: Frits van Merode

Reviewer's report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   Major Compulsory Revisions
   The question is not well defined. The authors want to 'explore' focus in hospitals and after the case studies define it. The problem is what are the authors looking for? They start from some concepts (derived from industrial literature) and later use them to define a framework. However is not clear what the benefit of such a framework would be?

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   Major Compulsory Revisions
   The methods are well defined, but the combination of a case study intented to explore 'focus' and the concepts allready there is odd. Moreover, there is a lot of econometric literature dealing with the efficiency, scale and speciality level of hospitals. Why is this link not made?

3. Are the data sound?
   Yes.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   Minor Essential Revisions
   The development from case mix to framework is obscure.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
   Major Compulsory Revisions
   Yes, but what I miss is the 'proof' that the conceptual framework explains something. It only describes something, but if is does not explain something,
what is the value then?

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
   Yes.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
   Yes.

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
   Yes

9. Is the writing acceptable?
   Yes

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I have no competing interests.