Reviewer's report

Title: Effectiveness of a Surgery Admission Unit for patients undergoing major elective surgery in a tertiary university hospital

Version: 1 Date: 10 September 2009

Reviewer: Peter Millard

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The study reports the outcome of introducing a new surgical admission policy in a Spanish hospital. The policy change admitted patients to a pre-operative assessment area, rather than direct to a bed in the surgical wards. The paper describes the change as being a surgical admission unit, but this is not practically what happened. For the new policy created ten admission 'sofa's' in three wards. Giving the potential to admit thirty pre-operative patients a day.

Greater clarity is necessary in describing the day-to-day procedures. Time of arrival, staffing, extra nurses or ward based different policies. etc. Describe 'sofa' what does this mean: a comfy chair? Describe it as it is, so that other policy makers in different hospitals now what was actually done.

The data analysis compared two cohorts of surgical inpatient, four monthly, two years apart. Clearly, if patients are not admitted overnight before their operation, it should not be unexpected that the average stay would be different. However, it would bring greater clarity if the maximum length of stay was reported.

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests: No