Reviewer’s report

Title: Acute Care Inpatients with Long-term Delayed-Discharge: Evidence from a Canadian Region

Version: 1 Date: 13 April 2012

Reviewer: Catherine Travers

Reviewer’s report:

I have read this manuscript 'Acute care Inpatients with Long-term delayed discharge: Evidence from a Canadian region' with interest. It is generally well-written, clear and concise, however, there are a couple of major compulsory revisions and a number of minor essential revisions required.

Major Compulsory Revision

I believe the authors should explain the stats method a bit more clearly - do you really mean 'Correlation analysis' (page 6) I've never heard of correlation analysis being used to identify independent groups (I'm not an expert statistician). Do they mean regression analysis? if they mean correlation analysis, they need to explain more clearly what was done.

Results page 6 - 1st sentence - the authors state that 19% of ALC patients used psychotropic medications. This doesn't appear to tally with what's in the figure - at least 30% are using anxiolytics??? psychotropics include all 4 meds listed in the figure.

Minor essential revisions

Introduction - page 4 I believe the objective should be re-stated. The authors state that those waiting for nursing home admission account for the greatest proportion of total ALC days - this is incorrect - the article indicates they account for 41.5% of ALC days.

Results - page 5 - line 4 from the bottom of the page - the authors refer to 'physical and cognitive impairment' however, 'physical impairment is not a characteristic listed in the figure - there is ADL impairment. However, ADL impairment can result from physical OR cognitive problems. The authors should state ADL impairment in the text rather than physical impairment which is not correct.

Also the last line of page 5 the word 'problems' should be inserted after the word behavior.

The Figures appear to be incorrectly labelled. The PDF indicates there are 5 figures although only 3 are referred to in the text (I suspect this is a typo). It would be most helpful to include the figure captions with the figures (rather than in the text only) - this will make it easier to ensure the reader is viewing the
correct figure.

Results - page 6 - last para - the word 'were' needs to be inserted before 'significantly associated with'

Discussion - page 8, last paragraph - third line from the bottom of the page - the authors state 'would be an essentially tool' this should be essential
Discussion - page 9 - 2nd para - 2nd last line - 'be' should be inserted before 'available for older'

Discretionary Revisions
Abstract - the authors state 'ALC have been the topic of many..." Would it be better to use the word 'target' ratehr than 'topic'?? just a thought

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests