Reviewer's report

Title: Design of a prospective cohort study to assess ethnic inequalities in patient safety in hospital care using mixed methods.

Version: 5 Date: 24 September 2012

Reviewer: Jennifer Hollowell

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Major compulsory revisions
The authors have satisfactorily addressed most of the major issues raised in my previous report with the exception of the following:

1. It is not correct to describe the analyses to be conducted to select the explanatory variables to be analyses as 'sensitivity analyses' (p15-16) These should be descriptive/exploratory analyses conducted before the outcome data are analyses to inform decisions about the explanatory variables to be included in the main analysis. It is essential that these variables are selected and defined and the decisions taken documented before the main outcome analyses are conducted. If this is what the authors intend, this needs to be explicitly stated.

2. I remain unconvinced that the authors will be able to ‘control for primary diagnosis’. How do they propose to use ICD9-CM codes to do this in a logistic model?

The above should only require fairly small changes but it is important that these are both addressed.

Some of the revisions appear to have resulted in less proficient written English as well as some typographic errors. For example, on page 7 “We ask co-operation of a senior nurse to help deciding patients selected by the researchers can indeed be approached and have no severe medical contraindications”. I recommend that the authors ask a native English speaker to check and copy edit the manuscript, paying attention to style and grammar and also to the terminology used to describe patients (For example on p16 “… a patient group that does not master the Dutch language, and a group that is sometimes not literate…” could be phrased less judgemental). Also, the authors have redrafted the article in the present tense to reflect the fact that the study has already started but this has been done inconsistently and the text slips into the future tense in a number of places.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.