Reviewer’s report

Title: A methodological approach to identify external factors for indicator-based risk adjustment illustrated by a cataract surgery register

Version: 3  Date: 19 February 2014

Reviewer: Stephan Kirschner

Reviewer’s report:

The paper is recommended for publication with few minor revisions

1. The question is well defined a useful for clinical use
2. The paper used well selected statistical methods. The limits of these methods are discussed in detail.
3. The data used for the article seem to be sound. A further description of a valid data set could contribute to even more distinctness.
4. The paper proposed a new way to discover relevant risk factors in cataract surgery on basis of register data. The data presentation and the selection of methodology are well motivated.
5. The discussion could be improved discussing a possible dependency of the risk factors as well as an analysis of the centre effect
6. The low model fit is discussed. For the scientific community further steps to discover so far unknown risk factors may be useful. The structured analysis of complication data may be a source for further risk factors.
7. To my knowledge yes.
8. yes
9. yes

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I worked with Prof. Krummenauer in the past