Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 4 Date: 28 March 2014

Reviewer: Stefan Sauerland

Reviewer’s report:

The reviewer thanks the authors for revising their manuscript and addressing all comments. Therefore, no major revisions are required. However, several linguistic corrections have to be made.

1. In the first new sentence on page 12, there are two typos: Please correct ‘choosen’ into ‘chosen’ and ‘justifyable’ into ‘justifiable’.

2. One of the following sentences contains the word ‘for’ on three occasions and thus is hard to understand: “A relative risk scale might be considered for a study looking for relevant external factors for e.g. endophthalmitis.”

Do the authors mean: “A relative risk scale might be considered in a study looking at relevant external factors responsible for rare events, e.g. endophthalmitis.”?

3. Please reformulate the following sentence:

OLD: “However, in a inderdiscipiniary study surrounding including clinicians a absolute, excess risk scale is more acceptable.”

NEW: “However, in an interdisciplinary clinical setting an absolute excess risk scale is more acceptable.”

4. Also the following sentence is difficult to understand and contains spelling errors: “Relating the effect to a base line magnitude is a more straight-forward way to propose clinically relevant and understandablye thresholds.”

I suggest to avoid the word ‘effect’ by writing: “When being presented with an absolute difference most clinicians find such information easier to understand and more straight-forward to interpret as compared to a relative difference.”

5. Further below on page 12, the word ‘conitous’ requires correction.

6. Also on page 13, the new sentence requires editing.

OLD: ‘It is task of future studies and discussion to determine the necessary dimension of Nagelkerks’s (Nagelkerke R2) fit depending on type of endpoint and variable.’

NEW: It is the task of future studies and discussion to estimate to what extent (as measured by Nagelkerke’s R2) logistic regression modelling can be expected to explain the variation in cataract surgery results”.

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 declare that I have no competing interests.