Reviewer’s report

Title: Validation of the Provincial Transfer Authorization Centre database: a comprehensive database containing records of all inter-facility patient transfers in the province of Ontario.

Version: 2 Date: 29 August 2006
Reviewer: Lisa Lix

Reviewer’s report:

General
The authors have addressed the major concerns raised by both reviewers. The revision contains a much clearer description of the methods and results. I have only a few points to which the authors should attend.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

The authors assessed the accuracy rate and error rate for two free text variables: transfer service name, and primary reason. The authors should indicate how they established an exact match between the inter-facility transfer record and the hospital record for these two variables. For example, were there certain key words that were used to establish a match?

Throughout, the authors have used the term “hospital record” to describe the gold standard to which inter-facility transfer record is compared. The hospital record from the sending facility is adopted as the gold standard. However, it is not the case that a nursing home or long-term care facility could be the sending facility? If so, is it correct to refer to the record from the nursing home or long-term care facility as the hospital record?

For consistency, the term “hospital chart” in Table 3 should be replaced with “hospital record”.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions
Level of interest: An article of limited interest
Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No
Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.