Reviewer’s report

Title: Hospitalisations during the last year of life of nursing home residents: A retrospective cohort study from Germany

Version: 4 Date: 9 May 2006

Reviewer: Steven Zweig

Reviewer’s report:

General

I acknowledge the comments of the authors, but with all due respect, in the latest draft there continues to be references to a cohort of nursing home patients and hospitalization rates for nursing home patients without reference to the fact that all the patients studied here were selected because they died within a certain period. This starts with the abstract (results: NH residents should say "NH residents who died", and continues throughout the discussion: page 10 first and second paragraphs and page 11 first and third paragraphs). Comparisons of these types can only be made with studies of nursing home residents who died. I would feel better about the paper if these issues are clarified.

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

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

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'