Reviewer's report

**Title:** The structure of quality systems is important to the process and outcome. An empirical study of 386 hospital departments in Sweden.

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 31 January 2007

**Reviewer:** Pascal Staccini

**Reviewer's report:**

This paper gives some evidence facts that can help to set up a quality management project and be aware of pitfalls to avoid. The method used is interesting and methodological tips are given to reproduce the study in other contexts.

Discretionary Revisions:
- what was the history of quality management in each department? do they have the same quality management structure? is there a central department which specifically handles all quality programme in the hospital? have all departments been involved in quality management for a same period of time?
- what about risk as an outcome, as it has been admitted that risk reducing can be a good incentive to motivate health care staff
- is there an explanation of the inconsistence of B2 and B3 items? could it be linked to the heterogeneity of the organization of quality management in the departments?
- will it be possible to use this method to test the consistence of the questions of a quality referential?
- how do you explain the poor link between process and outcome? Is the inconsistence of B2 and B3 a cause? B3 depicts a great challenge for all risk/quality management systems to motivate adverse event reporting with a positive feeling. outcomes include adverse events statistics. so, could it be an explanation?

**What next?:** Accept after discretionary revisions

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

**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