Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Diffusion of good practices of care and decline of the association with case volume: the example of breast conserving surgery

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 21 June 2007

**Reviewer:** Marko Simunovic

**Reviewer’s report:**

General

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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)

1. The authors should justify their cutpoints for volume groups, or emphasize that these were selected prior to data analyses. Numerous authors suggest it is more appropriate to analyze groups with equal numbers of patients.

2. The authors may wish to comment on potential ecological factors (e.g., hospital closures) that may explain the drop in percentage of cases in low-volume hospitals over time.

3. The authors may wish to clarify in the results that the final number of 18644 records represents 18644 unique patients. If this is so, the authors may also wish to comment on the low number of repeated admissions (i.e., 1391). This is low percentage of repeat surgery in comparison to most western jurisdictions, with such surgery presumably being provided for positive margins post BCS.

4. There are five sentences in the conclusion. It may be best to stop the paper after the first two sentences.

**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:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'