Reviewer’s report

Title: The most dangerous hospital or the most dangerous equation?

Version: 2 Date: 31 August 2007

Reviewer: Robert Gibberd

Reviewer’s report:

General
none

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

In the abstract, it is not clear that the number of deaths and not the rate is being considered: "the number of deaths in hospital is not ...' may be better.

page 5, square root of 10 is 3.2 and 40 is 6.3. Not sure why only one significant figure was used, while 2 were used for other values. Need to correct the (95% CI also.

Bottom line page 6. 'the 95% CI for the mortality rate ...' is clearer.

Figure 2 would be better to delete the regression line, since it has a random slope mean zero, but include the funnel lines as given in Figure 1. This makes this figure more relevant to the aim of the paper. Also, on page 8, delete the reference to the regression line and instead comment on the funnel plot in figure 2.

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

none

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

none

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

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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’