Reviewer's report

Title: Functional mapping of hospitals by diagnosis-dominant case-mix analysis

Version: 2 Date: 14 March 2007

Reviewer: Michael M Kashner

Reviewer's report:

1. I believe the authors have responded well to the critique.
2. The authors claim that Ci and Ri are "independent" based on a regression coefficient and an R-square. A better statistic would be a standard coefficient (with t-statistic, p value, and confidence interval), or a simple correlation (with p value). In any case, what they found was not independence, but rather a weak association. (Note: zero correlation can happen between items that are otherwise not independent). Independence is a very strong condition, and the data does not go further than saying the association is weak, if any.
3. "utilisation" should be "utilization".
4. Clarify that Japan and "current" German systems are similar (they did in response, but not in the paper). For example (say): Health care in Japan is financed for most of its citizens by premiums paid by insured persons, employers, and government compensation. The system in Japan is similar to the German system that was first introduced by Bismarck.
5. I like their interpretations of the data. This is a much improved paper from the first submission.