Reviewer’s report

Title: A predictive score to identify hospitalized patients requiring discharge to a post-acute care facility

Version: 2 Date: 4 January 2008

Reviewer: Alan Tennant

Reviewer’s report:

General Comments
This revised paper reports on the development of a simple predictive score to identify patients who will require discharge to a post acute care (PAC) facility (in-patient rehabilitation or nursing home) based upon information at 1 day and day 3 after admission for an acute medical condition.

Earlier issues, such as the number of false positives arising from their model have been adequately dealt with. The authors have emphasised the “early warning” nature of highlighting the risk for PAC at an early stage. Presumably, there is no reason why the algorithm could be applied some days later “in the form of a monitoring exercise. Fit statistics for the regression model have now been reported, although the paper is still without a power calculation.

Minor Essential revisions
What remains confusing is the reporting of the logistic models (Tables 2& 3). In Table 3 the confidence intervals appear to overlap 1, yet the p values are significant. Such CI’s would be consistent with a non-significant p value (except for acute medical problems which do not). Have the authors reported the unexponentiated coefficients and their associated CI’s in Tables 2&3? If so, this will need to be made explicit in the methods, as most readers will be more familiar with the exponentiated (odds) and their confidence intervals which one would expect not to overlap one when significant. This would explain the low coefficient for the number of acute medical problems in Table 3, which if exponentiated, would imply the less likelihood of a PAC placement.

If this is the case, it may be advisable to report the findings as exponentiated odds and their respective CI’s in both tables, in order to avoid confusing readers or make it very explicit what has been done, and therefore what a significant confidence interval would look like for an unexponentiated value.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being
Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests