Reviewer's report

Title: Prioritisation of patients on waiting lists for hip and knee arthroplasties and cataract surgery: instruments validation

Version: 1 Date: 19 November 2007

Reviewer: Bryan Parry

Reviewer's report:

General
A valuable paper of topical importance. Sound methods, appropriate analysis of useful results

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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)
1. sp. p7 line 14 'New Zeland'

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
1. The correlations between VAS and the IA and IC tools were good. Could the VAS be correlated to the 7 and 6 criteria of IA and IC respectively to gain an understanding of the weighting that surgeons were placing on them?

2. The inter-surgeon reliability was surprisingly high for this sort of clinical judgment exercise. Were the scenarios too bland in their range of variation leading to a 'damping' effect on surgeon judgment? More information on scenario construction required

3. P13 para 2: a little dismissive of equity of access for the individual patient. This is a real ethical issue which also has legal and political implications

4. p15 para 2: consider perhaps the role of a 'feedback' audit of surgeon scoring to reduce temporal score inflation and maintain confidence by funders and users of elective surgery?

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