Reviewer's report

**Title:** Prevalence of Associated Injuries of Spinal Trauma and Their Effect on Medical Utilization Among Hospitalized Adult Subjects: A Nationwide Data-based Study

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 10 March 2009

**Reviewer:** Michael D. Freeman

**Reviewer's report:**

- **Major Compulsory Revisions**
  
  The authors need to add a table 1 that describes the distribution of the initial injury of interest in the spine (e.g. type of spine injury as broken down under Materials and Methods, by gender). It is not clear what is represented by the NHI - is it a random sample of cases, are there cases that are systematically excluded, etc. The authors need to explain the nature of the data in the database more thoroughly.

  The authors used an ISS approach to anatomic categorization of injury and they should acknowledge this and provide a reference.

  If available, the authors should include data on injury mechanism - crash, fall, etc.

  The authors need to add a section to their discussion regarding the proportion of spine injuries that they believe are represented by their sample; are certain injuries types less or more likely to be in the NHI (crash vs fall) or is the sample a good representation of the Taiwanese spine injury experience?

- **Minor Essential Revisions**

  Since the data were mined from a publicly available database they should not use the term "enrolled" for their subjects, as this suggests a prospective design.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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