Reviewer's report

Title: Quality of Care and 30 day Mortality among Patients with Hip Fractures: A Nationwide Cohort Study

Version: 2 Date: 10 August 2009

Reviewer: Reijo Sund

Reviewer's report:

The authors have comprehensively responded to all my previous comments. Sensitivity analyses provide important evidence showing that the found associations are not random and not due to the most obvious confounding factors.

The only thing I'm a bit worried about is the presentation of only the "best" results in the abstract. For example, most likely the actual assessment of ADL before discharge is done at discharge. In that case it is easy to argue that if a patient dies during hospitalization there is "no need" for ADL assessment, which leads to overpresentation of patients who died during the 30 days in the "not met" category. For the nutritional risk assessment there should not be as strong potential bias as it is done withing 2 days after admission. Based on the sensitivity analyses, this reasoning seems to be valid as the exclusion of patients who died during hospitalization changes OR from 0.28 to 0.42, but OR for nutritional risk assessment hardly changes at all (0.98 vs. 1.01). In this sense, the latter results (where patients who died during hospitalization were excluded) seem to be closer to truth (at least in the discharge-ADL case) and should be reported as main results in the abstract instead of the biased ones.

Another small but interesting addition would be to include the estimated number of "avoidable" deaths, i.e. to report how many lives would have been saved if the quality of treatment had been "optimal".

Finally, a bit deeper speculation/discussion of possible causal mechanisms between the examined factors and short-term mortality could strengthen the manuscript.

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.