Reviewer's report

Title: Safety and Effectiveness of a Patient Blood Management (PBM) Program in Surgical Patients - The study design for a multi-center prospective epidemiologic non-inferiority trial

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Reviewer: Donat Rudolf Spahn

Reviewer's report:

This is a concise description of a highly interesting and important study.

Major comments
1. Hb intervention thresholds: Why were real low Hb intervention thresholds used (Hb<11 g/dL in men and Hb<10 g/dL in women) ? The WHO clearly defines anemia in men as a Hb<13 g/dL and in women as a Hb<12 g/dL, and Musallam et al. have clearly shown in 2011 (Lancet 378: 1396) that already mild anemia is associated with increased mortality (+40%) and increases morbidity (+30%). This discrepancy needs to be discussed.

Minor comments
2. Title page - Affiliations: Superscripts are a, b, e. Affiliations are a – k. This requires some fine-tuning.
3. References in the manuscript: Different formats were used within the text. Please unify.

Level of interest: An exceptional article

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

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