Reviewer's report

Title: Minimum volume standards in German hospitals. Do they get along with procedure centralization? A retrospective longitudinal data analysis.

Version: 2 Date: 30 October 2014

Reviewer: Lucia Nobilio

Reviewer's report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   Yes, work is well described in intent and objectives.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   Yes, the method of analysis is properly explained and easy to understand even for non-experts in statistical analysis.

3. Are the data sound?
   The data are appropriate and also, are indicated in the final discussion any gaps on the quality of the information source.

4. Do the figures appear to be genuine, i.e. without evidence of manipulation?
   Yes, statistical analysis is appropriate, the results reported are complete and well organized. There not appears to be opportunistic mistakes and omissions.

5. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   Yes, the manuscript is well organized and the data are presented in an appropriate manner.

6. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
   The discussion is very accurate. It is based on the data presented and the comparison with other international studies. It clearly describes the arguments on which the conclusions are based.
   I suggest just to try, where possible, to synthesize the text “discussion” to make it shorter.

7. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
   Yes.

8. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
   Yes.
9. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
Yes, the title is self explanatory and the abstract respects the content of the manuscript

10. Is the writing acceptable?
Yes

Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)
à I suggest just to try, where possible, to synthesize the text “discussion” to make it shorter.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
à Pag 8, line 23: enter (table 2) after “For pancreatic intervention…”
à Pag 8, line 25 to page 9 line 1: seems to be inverted the numbering of the quintiles compared to the labels in the table 2. Indicate correctly if on 1st quintile ("Quintil 1 hospitals" in table 2) are hospitals with higher volume, obviously) instead, hospitals with lower volume correspond to "Quintil 5" in table 2...and so on also in the description of 2nd and 4th quintiles. In the text is contrary described.
à Pag 9, line 2: enter (table 3) after “For esophageal interventions…”
à Pag 9, line 4: enter (table 4) after “Knee TEP interventions…”
à Pag 9, line 5: enter (tables 5, 6, 7) after “For all three transplantions procedures…”

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'