Reviewer's report

Title: Early warning scoring systems versus standard observations charts for wards in South Africa: a cluster randomised controlled trial

Version: 2 Date: 13 January 2015

Reviewer: Christopher Parshuram

Reviewer's report:

Improved manuscript describing the design and conduct of a pragmatic cluster rct of training program of Cape Town MEWS.

second review. the flow and discussion sections are significantly improved.

Major Compulsory Revisions
1 Please Include Primary outcome in abstract.

Minor Essential Revisions
1 clarity of tables - to inlcude (conspicuously) the primary outcome perhaps s part of Table 2
2 table 2 could be improved, as a summary table and combined with T5. headings could more clearly describe patients / observation per patient in legends/ headers.
3 tables could have statistical data removed leaving OR and p values

Discretionary Revisions
1 consider revising he order of the design/ methods section. to have intervention before HOW it was allocated.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

As declared previously
I hold shares in Bedside Clinical Systems, a clinical decision support company that has products (presently for children) that include an FDA approved early warning system. This company is unlikely to benefit financially from the
publication - or non-publication of this manuscript. If the company decides to expand to adult EWS then this paper may be of relevance, however the recommendations I have made for this manuscript are more about implementation and the validity of the system used, than recommending a product.

Accordingly I believe I have provided an unbiased review, and unbiased recommendations.

Sincerely

Chris Parshuram.