Reviewer's report

Title: Small-scale, homelike facilities versus regular psychogeriatric nursing home wards: a cross-sectional study into residents' characteristics

Version: 1 Date: 15 November 2009

Reviewer: Thomas Fischer

Reviewer's report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
Yes, the research question is sufficiently well defined and clear.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
Methods are appropriate and well described. The inclusion of a multivariate logistic regression must especially be applauded.

   It might be helpful for international readers to briefly explain how Dutch nursing homes are divided into different types of wards (rehab, psychogeriatric etc.) as this is not the case in most other countries. This would make it easier for readers to understand the characteristics of the sample population from the nursing home and to draw conclusions (Minor Essential Revision).

3. Are the data sound?
Data are sound and trustworthy.

   An explanation would be helpful regarding the calculation of length of stay. Length of stay (LOS) in newly opened facilities (like some of the small-scale living facilities) must inevitably be shorter than LOS in long established facilities (like traditional nursing homes). This might (in parts) explain the difference in mean LOS between the two types of facilities. This phenomenon should also be considered in the discussion of the results (Minor Essential Revision).

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
Yes, all relevant standards are met.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
Yes, discussion and conclusion are based on the data and well balanced. Issues surrounding length of stay should be added. International results may be considered in more detail (Discretionary Revision).

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
Yes, limitations are pointed out clearly.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
Yes, this work is clearly acknowledged.
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
Yes, title and abstract are clear and reflect what has been found.

9. Is the writing acceptable?
Yes, writing adheres to high standards. It is clear and well understandable.

**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.