Reviewer's report

Title: When is rational to participate in a clinical trial? A game theory approach incorporating trust, regret and guilt

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Reviewer: Michael Retsky

Reviewer's report:

This is a well done study on an important subject. The findings are disturbing and cynical but believable. The paper is understandable and quite readable but many prepositions are missing and it will take a native English speaker only a few minutes to add those. I suggest that be done. Algebraic variables in the text should be in italics for ease in readership. The prisoner's dilemma is an important concept in this paper but not described at all. It should be given a paragraph early in the paper just to aid the general readership. Recommendations are proper based on results presented. This paper might be read by patients considering joining a clinical trial. They won't be able to follow the math but they will surely understand the results. My compliments to the authors.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I am a cancer researcher and currently proposing one or more clinical trials. I am a long term cancer survivor and am on the board of directors of the Colon Cancer Alliance (an unpaid position).