Reviewer's report

**Title:** Are concomitant treatments confounding factors in randomized controlled trials on intensive blood-glucose control in type 2 diabetes? A systematic review

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 13 March 2013

**Reviewer:** Victor Montori

**Reviewer's report:**

Nice concept and great point to highlight. Nice discussion of co-interventions and the need to report them even in very large trials, particularly in those that have an open design.

**Major revisions:**

1. Could you contact the authors of your 8 reviews and obtain data to further enhance your paper?
2. Can you pool the proportion of cointervention for every drug as if it was an outcome of the trial (under the idea that everything that happens after randomization is an outcome of the trial) and report the interaction between the difference in cointervention and the effect of glycemic control on outcome?
3. Can you model the effect of the magnitude of cointervention you are finding on the outcomes reported? In other words, can you estimate the attributable benefit from each of these drugs and model the impact of the difference in co-intervention on the magnitude of difference attributable to glycemic control?

These three approaches will help move the paper from speculation to estimates of effect of cointerventions. This is particularly important because small difference in proportions in mega trials will frequently be significant between arms but their impact may not be clinically relevant.

**Minor essential revisions**

Table 1 needs a legend/explanation

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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:**
None