Reviewer's report

Title: OvidSP Medline-to-PubMed search filter translation: a methodology for extending search filter range to include PubMed's unique content

Version: 2 Date: 24 April 2013

Reviewer: Edith Leclercq

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Minor Essential Revision

Page 16, second paragraph states the purpose of this study. I think here the authors also should mention that this is a nice method for identifying synonyms for medical terms, and that is is not the purpose of this study to develop a search filter for max sensitivity/recall. So that proposed search filter needs improvement later on.

However, only 18% of the lost set was identified, so still a huge amount of records is missed. Therefore I would also rename Table 4. "Final PubMed ...." suggests that the filter is made for optimal search results, and that is not the case. I would suggest the following title for Tabel 4: "PubMed Heart Failure Filter for identifying indexed and non-indexed studies combining the validated PubMed translation and supplementary textword only components (in bold)"

The proposed search strategy is Table 4 can easily further developed into an optimal search strategy with the highest sensitivity.

This is more or less suggested in the third paragraph of page 16. However I do not understand the AND Boolean operator here. With AND you restrict your search, and with OR you broaden it. I think the statements here are not correct. At least the authors must this clarify further. "The AND operator might serve to broaden the search ...."is not true. In fact with too many AND's in a search string you will end with 0 data.

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 am the first author of a publication on validation of PubMed search filters