Reviewer's report

Title: Comparison of intervention effects in split-mouth and parallel-arm randomized controlled trials: a meta-epidemiological study

Version: 1 Date: 13 March 2014

Reviewer: nikolaos pandis

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting and easy to follow paper. The number of included studies is small but the authors discussed adequately this limitation.

I recommend publication and I have the following comments:

1. It is not clear to me if the authors are recommending combining in a meta-analysis RCTs with one intervention per patient and split-mouth RCTs or to subgroup (?) Perhaps, a little more emphasis here would be good.

2. Although the authors discuss how to include split-mouth estimates in the meta-analysis, more emphasis in the importance of the correct method of inclusion (difference between arms rather than estimate per group) would be welcome in the discussion.

I do not need to see the revision.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'