Reviewer's report

Title: Improving accuracy of medication identification in an older population using a medication bottle color symbol label system

Version: 3 Date: 4 December 2011

Reviewer: Nancy Morris

Reviewer's report:

Revisions made by the authors adequately address comments made in the first review. A few additional comments to their revisions follow.

- Discretionary Revisions

1. Background – delete second sentence as that includes data related to medications taken in the hospital and leave in your data that refer specifically to outpatient medication use.

- Minor Essential Revisions

None

- Major Compulsory Revisions

2. Abstract – Much improvement noted in revision. The conclusions however go beyond the data. The authors suggest that “the proposed medication symbol label system provides a promising adjunct to national efforts in addressing the issue of medication misuse in the home through the improvement of medication labeling and health literacy.” I don’t think they can assume there was an improvement in health literacy since it wasn’t measured pre/post and since we don’t actually know if the addition of a color coded symbol improves health literacy. I suggest ending the sentence with “improvement of medication labeling.”

3. Table of qualitative results is difficult to interpret as presented. If I understand correctly you posted the question asked of the focus group and then listed the themes of their responses in the left side column and examples in the right column. Typically, examples of qualitative data to support identified themes are direct quotes from participants. If you don’t have these I think you could just go with a summary of the themes. I don’t think you have to try and put this in a table format. For example, in response to the first question it sounds like the responses indicated that participants understand that medication labels provide information like drug name, dosage, when to take, refill date and side effects. Concerns raised were that the font was too small, that there was too much information currently on labels, that participants would like to have the purpose of the medication on the label, and that change by manufacturer of pill size and color was challenging. You could then go on to discuss what they thought about the proposed addition to existing labels.
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'.