Reviewer's report

**Title:** How do family physicians and patients communicate about cardiovascular risk? Prevalence and determinants of different risk communication formats

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 18 December 2010

**Reviewer:** Tim Holt

**Reviewer's report:**

I enjoyed reading this paper and would recommend publication. The aims are clearly described and the methods appropriate. The results are potentially important, although further research may be required on a larger, more representative scale. The main limitation (recognised by the authors) is the response rate and possible lack of generalisability to the wider physician and patient community. Despite this, the work is well described, set in a clear background context, and reports useful data.

Discretionary revision

A further analysis might have included the impact of physician/patient gender dyads on the communication strategy used, as this was presumably recorded but not reported. Female physicians used verbal communication strategies almost exclusively, but I would have been interested to know whether in the case of male physicians the choice of strategy was influenced by the gender of the patient. We are told that (overall) patient gender influenced choice of communication strategy, with female patients more likely to receive the verbal option, but this might have been simply due to a tendency for women to consult female physicians, who apparently prefer verbal communication strategies. So unless I have misunderstood it, the actual impact of the gender dyad has not been reported - a missed opportunity.

I am aware of this issue due to the work of my departmental colleague Dr Ann Adams, who has co-authored a systematic review in this area:


Minor essential revision

As a drafting error I noticed that references 12 and 40 are duplicates.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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