Reviewer's report

**Title:** Prostate Specific Antigen testing policy world wide varies greatly and seems not to be in accordance with guidelines: a systematic review

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 11 July 2012

**Reviewer:** Steven Zeliadt

**Reviewer's report:**

This is a straight forward and informative review of the handful of articles about PSA follow-up policies. The approach and quality of the review are appropriate, and highlight the variability in the designs of studies on this topic.

**Major Concerns:**

The manuscript could be edited for improved clarity between “survey” and “database” studies. For example, the sentence “There seems to be a small group of about 20% of physicians who only refer after a PSA value > 10 ng/ml [15,17,20].” on P. 11 was confusing. This is a loaded sentence to be based on 3 studies.

The tone of the sentence on P.11 is a bit biased. “If these patients did not receive follow-up testing, as it apparently holds no consequences, maybe these PSA tests should not have been conducted in the first place.” The authors may consider editing.

This sentence on P.11 “Knowing your PSA value to be elevated, can cause a lot of (unnecessary) distress in patients [31].” is an important point, but does not seem to be related to the paragraph where it is located.

The paragraph on p.12 describing the ERSPC trial that begins “All of the studies included...” and ends with “a more active approach of PSA testing” is too much of an oversimplification of the ERSPC trial and is not necessary to the review, which is about follow-up policies of elevated PSA tests. The authors may want to comment on follow-up policies from the ERSPC and PLCO but an oversimplification of the screening does not help the reader understand the implications of their review.

**Minor Concerns**

I was expecting to see a discussion of whether “survey” reports of follow-up practices and “database” reports of practices were similar or whether providers say one thing and do another? This review could be strengthened by a specific discussion of this topic.

**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:**

I declare that I have no competing interests