Reviewer's report

Title: Development and validation of a clinical prediction rule for chest wall syndrome in primary care

Version: 4 Date: 10 July 2012

Reviewer: Michael MY Yelland

Reviewer's report:

Final Review of paper submitted to BMC Family Practice:
‘Development and validation of a clinical prediction rule for chest wall syndrome in primary care’ by Alexandre Ronga, Paul Vaucher, Jörg Haasenritter, Norbert Donner-Banzhoff, Stefan Bösner, François Verdon, Thomas Bischoff, Bernard Burnand, Bernard Favrat and Lilli Herzig
Reviewer: A/Prof Michael Yelland, School of Medicine, Griffith University, Australia.

Journal: Confidential comments to editors
No comments in this section.

Reviewer’s report

Major Compulsory Revisions
No major compulsory revisions required.

Minor Essential Revisions
I am satisfied with the revisions that the authors have made and the justifications for the requested changes that they have elected not to make.
(Please note that in my line referencing system, only lines with text are numbered. I have ignored blank lines when counting)

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
Yes, I am satisfied with the revisions that the authors have made.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
The methods are certainly appropriate for a condition for which a definitive diagnosis is problematic and a clinical diagnosis that is strengthened or refuted with the passage of time. I am satisfied with the revisions that the authors have made here.

3. Are the data sound?
The authors describe a list of variables that have face validity in the diagnosis of chest wall syndrome. The data collecting process described is both comprehensive and has a high follow-up rate over time. This is reassuring.
4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?

The methods describe procedures for protection against bias for the derivation and validation cohorts, including the classification of patients without a clear diagnosis from the GP, independent expert review of medical records, random audits of documentation and use of a reference panel. I am satisfied with the revisions that the authors have.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?

Yes I am satisfied with the revisions that the authors have made.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?

Yes.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?

Yes, I am satisfied with the revisions that the authors have made.

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?

The title accurately describes the work. I am satisfied with the revisions that the authors have made.

9. Is the writing acceptable?

Yes.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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.