Reviewer's report

Title: Standardised assessment of patients' capacity to manage medications: a systematic review of published instruments.

Version: 1 Date: 11 February 2009

Reviewer: Christian Dolder

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
1) Background, page 5: The authors discuss the limitations of a previous review (ref #12) that examined the same topic. It is made clear how the current manuscript differs from the previous review. What resulted from the authors “more critical review” of the literature? In other words, are the findings from the current paper different from the previous review?

2) Methods, page 6: The authors seem to be missing studies published or reported in 2008.

3) Results, page 8: Please provide more detailed analysis related to content validity. The ability of medication management measures that accurately reflect patient-specific abilities to manage their own medications (versus an artificial and/or unrealistic instrument) cannot be understated.

4) Results, page 11: In general, there appears to be a large number of constructs examined but only by a small number of studies per construct. What are readers supposed to make of this?

5) Discussion, page 16: In my opinion, the most useful section of the manuscript is where the authors recommend six of the reviewed instruments based on a variety of study components. With that said, please provide a more clear rational as to why these are recommended. Consider making recommendations based on subsets of users. For instance, the authors recommend a few instruments that can take 30-60 minutes to administer. Are these feasible for clinicians? Which of the instruments are recommended for practice? Which are recommended for research? Are there 1 or 2 instruments that stand out above the 6 recommended instruments?

Minor Essential Revisions
6) Extreme groups, page 14: Consider using a more appropriate subheading.

Discretionary Revisions
7) Title: In light of the numerous medication management-related constructs that the included studies examine, I wonder if use of the word ‘capacity’ is misleading. As a group, the reviewed studies appear to examine patient abilities to self-manage medications
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.