Reviewer's report

Title: Home care utilization in chronic kidney disease: a systematic review

Version: 1 Date: 12 February 2014

Reviewer: Donal O'Donoghue

Reviewer's report:

This is a timely and helpful SR. It highlights the need for more structured research addressing topics of CKD community, healthcare/social care system and patient/carer relevance in these populations receiving supported home care in advanced CKD. I support publication with minor changes;

1 I would ask the authors to consider alteration of the title – to most in the kidney home care includes self care. Maybe the title should be assisted or supported home care?

2 In the definition – does home mean usual place of residence or own home? Please clarify. The EoLC literature uses the term usual place of care and includes hospice and care home – I think these are excluded in this study (which is fine) but could it be more explicit

3 Could the search strategy be available as a wen appendix or eg on BC Renal Agency website

4 The term CKD modality leads me to think it is RRT modality – one doesn’t usually refer to non ESRD CKD as on a modality although some refer to conservative care as a modality

5 Could the authors be more explicit re conservative kidney care – it looks like it wasn’t rarely reported on. I think the readership will be interested in this gap and it could be expanded upon. The whole terminology turmoil makes it difficult to follow at times in the wider literature as some use ESRD to mean only RRT (some only Dx) , some all stage 5 and so on.

6 The final date searched – to present or may 12 (librarian search)

7 line 293 the 15/19 seem a bit random – fatigue and creatinine!! perhaps worth an explanation (I know its in table 2)

8 When making ref to ref 59 – the authors refer to preDx and Dx comparators - do they mean predx or conservative care – please be explicit

9 table 2 Bummer – in the HD costs is that Maintenance HD – could that be made explicit

10 Wilde ref – Lencester or Leicester?

11 in ref to CCI – perhaps the index doesn’t contain sufficient re functionality / motivation -? an additional sentence or 2.

12 – it may not be politically correct but many of the studies are not in highest citation index journals – does that underscore the value we put on these
important research studies? Or is it a feature of quality ??

I enjoyed reading it

**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'