Reviewer's report

Title: Are pediatric Open Access journals promoting good publication practice: An analysis of author instructions

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Reviewer: Sara Schroter

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Are pediatric Open Access journals promoting good publication practice: An analysis of author instructions

This paper looks at uptake of editorial policies and recommendations by OA pediatric journals. The authors hypothesise that a high proportion of OA journals will adopt policies.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1) Editors’ adoption of recommendations on good publication practice could be influenced by resources and the size of the journal. Some journals, for example the top General Medical journals, are well resourced and have the capacity to keep up to date with recent reporting guidelines, policy issues, and best practice. This is not to excuse bad practice, but to recognise that some journals are run by single busy clinical editors. It would have been interesting if the authors had looked at size of journal in some way (number of editors, number of submissions received, etc). Editorial Boards also influence individual journal policies.

2) A comparison is made with an earlier study of journals indexed in the Journal Citation Report. There must have been some overlap between the two samples as some open access journals will have been indexed on the JCR. I agree that journals with websites are probably more likely to keep up to date with all the recommendations and policies as it is easy to post links to other websites etc and more expensive to print pages in a printed “conventional” journal. But the issue is whether the journal has a website not its publishing model ie open access or not.

3) The authors acknowledge the limitation of the small sample size. Due to the small size, I am not convinced that meaningful conclusions can be made about the role of open access publishing influencing uptake of recommendations.

Minor Essential Revisions

1) The Discussion section raises several significant limitations but does not do much to reassure the reader that these limitations will not have seriously limited the results.

2) The fact that journals might refer to policies etc yet not adhere to these in practice is not mentioned. What is needed is analysis of papers published by these journals to see if they actually adhere to the policies that they are
promoting (or not promoting).

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**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