Reviewer's report

Title: A decision aid for considering indomethacin prophylaxis vs. symptomatic treatment of PDA for extreme low birth weight infants

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Reviewer: Peter Giannone

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The manuscript “A decision aid for considering indomethacin prophylaxis vs. symptomatic treatment of PDA for extreme low birth weight infants” by AlFaleh et. al. is a well-written manuscript attempting to bring the parent into the decision tree regarding treatment with indomethacin prophylaxis for intraventricular hemorrhage and patent ductus arteriosis. The authors base their work on the Ottawa Decision Support Framework. The objective of the manuscript posed by the authors is well defined and the manuscript adheres to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition. The discussion and conclusions are well balanced and adequately supported by the data and some limitations of the work are clearly stated. The the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found as well.

However, I do have several concerns:

Major Compulsory Revisions

1) While the methods appear appropriate, I am concerned why the authors did not supply some or all of the questions for review. Could the authors supply this information in a supplemental form if they do not feel comfortable publishing them?

2) What specific steps were taken to ensure the questions would not bias the parent towards one decision?

3) Under parent feedback, how were expectant mothers interviewed if they were selected from your NICU? To that end, when do you propose implanting this tool since indomethacin prophylaxis needs to be given shortly after birth to be most effective? Labor is a stressful time and a difficult time for parents to make a decision, so when would this occur? Also, when and how do parents find out what their “choice” was?

4) Why were only mothers interviewed? Would a better assessment of the tool be to make both parents participate if the father is available also? I understand further research is needed, but how do you propose to intervene if the parents differ on their opinion regarding treatment? Or if it differs from the opinion of the attending neonatologist? Does one opinion override others? What was done when this tool was used for other treatments?

5) There is literature regarding potential benefit for male infants in term of
neurodevelopmental outcomes? Was this in the Decision Aid or any option for gender specific treatment of the baby?

6) One out of ten mothers needed help completing the Decision Aid. It would concern me that perhaps the aid is too complicated or not on the appropriate level if this mother was one of the two who did not go to college. Was this the case. If so, I would want to see an expanded population interviewed.

7) What steps will be in place to ensure the questions are up to date based on current medical knowledge?

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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.