Reviewer's report

Title: Cost-effectiveness of programs to eliminate disparities in elderly vaccination rates in the United States

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Reviewer: Simon Walker

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting paper which should be considered for publication but requires more clarity with regards to the methods and data used. In particular, there is a lack of clarity about how the effectiveness and costs of the interventions have been derived, particularly with regards to the more intense strategies.

Further comment:

Given the difference in uptake rates between Hispanics and African Americans is it appropriate to aggregate them into one group?

I'm unclear how the perspective taken is societal- the costs included appear to be health care specific apart from a "seeking clinic care cost"

They discuss a one year cycle for the model, but patients appear able to progress through multiple states within a year

Given the one year time cycle, how do they take account of HRQoL decrements for patients who suffer flu or IPD for example? More detail is required on the quality of life scores used.

How appropriate is it to use the meningitis rates as a proxy for disability rates?

You state that you have conservatively assumed that the entire cohort received the PSSV in year 1- why this is conservative needs to be explained.

Much greater detail is required on the costing of the interventions.

For the high intensity programmes have you simply aggregated the effects of the separate programmes within them? If so, this is making a strong assumption about the independence and additivity of the results from different studies and needs to be discussed.

Finally, some discussion of the weakness of using a non infectious disease model is required.

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