Reviewer’s report

Title: Clinic Variation in Recruitment Metrics, Patient Characteristics and Treatment Use in a Trial of the Osteoarthritis Management

Version: 1 Date: 16 July 2014

Reviewer: Ernest Vina

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This is a very well-written manuscript that provides very thorough details about the PRIMO study population. I do have a few inquiries that I would consider "Minor"

1. In the methodology section, the authors mentioned that diagnosis of hip and/or knee OA were "based on radiographic evidence." Authors should define exactly what this is. Is it based on a Kellgren-Lawrence grading score? If so, who reviewed them? How were they reviewed?

2. The authors also stated that those who did not have radiographic evidence of knee/hip OA were excluded. How old were these x-rays that were reviewed? If the x-rays are too old, then new OA patients would be unintentionally excluded.

3. In the Results section, the authors reported that "ICCs indicated considerable between clinic variation for use of pain medications, PT . . ." This was followed with a statement that: "There was lower but potentially meaningful between-clinic variation (ICCs <=0.01) for use of analgesics and herbs or supplements." What's the difference between "pain medications" and "analgesics"? Both statements seem to contradict one another.

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