Reviewer’s report

Title: Pain medication management of musculoskeletal conditions at first presentation in primary care: analysis of routinely collected medical record data

Version: 2 Date: 19 October 2014

Reviewer: Christina Abdel Shaheed

Reviewer’s report:

This is a study evaluating pharmacological management of new musculoskeletal conditions and the characteristics which influence prescribing pattern. The paper is well written and poses an important research question.

Major issues: musculoskeletal conditions are not clearly defined. The results are described according to pain location however more is needed about the actual condition. For example was the patient presenting with an acute sprain or non-specific low back pain? This information seems critical to addressing the primary aim of the study.

Minor issues: authors should include examples of the types of drugs or drug combinations that went into each category. It would also be useful to report these results separately.

Abstract

Regression results are not included in the abstract. This should be added.

Methods: more description of the types of musculoskeletal conditions needs to be included. Authors refer to citation 8 however this needs to be described in some detail in the methods.

Results: the authors present results based on pain location rather than condition. It would be useful to know what the condition was that patients presented with.

Conclusion: lines 346 and 347 please state what these factors were.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field.

Quality of written English: Acceptable.

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

NA