Reviewer’s report

Title: Adherence to physiotherapy clinical guideline acute ankle injury and determinants of adherence: a cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 22 February 2007

Reviewer: Pierre Durieux

Reviewer’s report:

General

This article is clearly written, interesting and addresses an important topic, how to change health professional behavior. Most studies published in this topic address physician behavior and studies concerning other groups of health professionals are lacking.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

This paper raises two major problems:
1) The participating physiotherapists do not seem to be representative of the general population of physiotherapists. This aspect is discussed by the authors who say also that the registration form could have influence them. This raises also another point which is not discussed by the authors: Who extracted the data to calculate the indicators? the participating physiotherapists? this could have introduce a major bias. 2) The authors of the paper analysed patients characteristics. But, what about the physiotherapists’ characteristics. It seems clear that they could also have influence adherence to recommendations. How was this problem was taken into account?

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

I do not like the way the main result is presented in the abstract (“at least”). Results in the abstract should be more precise.
In general, in the manuscript, it should be important that each time a percentage is given, the numbers should also be given.
Data for 174 patients are analysed in the manuscript: could it be possible to know how many patients were eligible and what are the reasons for non inclusion. Some information is given for the physiotherapists, but not for the patients.
Quality indicators: the number of treatment sessions seems to be an indicator of process, not an indicator of outcome.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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:
no