Reviewer’s report

Title: Methodological quality of test accuracy studies included in systematic reviews in obstetrics and gynaecology: sources of bias

Version: 2 Date: 4 January 2011

Reviewer: Nynke Smidt

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Reply to the authors:
1) No comments
2) No comments
3) Although the number of articles that included a flow chart is minimal (< 5%) it is very important to report this as a flow chart is associated with better quality of reporting making the judgement of the methodological quality easier. I will leave it up to the editor whether this information is included in the paper or not.
4) I leave it up to the editor whether he/she wants to publish figure 2 or that this information can be presented in a table or in the text.
5) I do understand that the authors cannot present the design characteristics (case-control versus cohort studies), journals, sample size of studies, test characteristics (index and reference standard), target condition, study population, setting for each study, but it would be interested to see the variation and to give readers an idea about what kind of studies are included in this review. However, I will leave this also up to the editor.
6) Maybe I was very clear in my question, but it would be worth to add the legend is missing. It is not clear from the graph what ‘Yes’, ‘No’, ‘unclear’ and ‘not applicable’ is.
7) No comments
8) No comments
9) With regard to my second comment “Did the authors found the same poorly reported items compared to other reviews investigated the quality of reporting using STARD?”. Hopefully, I can explain here. There are more authors that have investigated the quality of reporting of diagnostic test accuracy studies on other medical topics. It would be interested to see whether the same poorly reported STARD are found in the reviews, irrespective of the medical topic. This could indicate that some STARD items are more difficult to report than other STARD items. It would then be clear that more attention to these items is needed (by reviewers, editors, authors, but also the STARD steering committee). However, I will leave it up the editor whether this is above the scope of the paper.
10) No comments
11) No comments
12) No comments