Reviewer's report

Title: A preliminary exploration of the feasibility of offering men information about potential prostate cancer treatment options before they know their biopsy results

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Reviewer: Matthew Nielsen

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The authors present what is essentially a feasibility study to evaluate the concept of presenting patients with information about prostate cancer treatment options (through an established decision aid) at the time of prostate biopsy—prior to the establishment of a prostate cancer diagnosis. The study was apparently motivated, at least in part, by concerns raised by the investigators' local ethical review board regarding potential harms of presenting this information to patients, some of whom were not destined to be diagnosed with prostate cancer.

The results presented herein suggest that these concerns are unfounded; in fact, there are some indications that patients receiving the decision aid fared better than those receiving usual care. Though the small sample size precludes definitive conclusions in this regard, I believe these data provide reassurance that the proposed larger study should move forward.

I also agree with the authors' proposition, supported by prior studies, that patients coping with a new cancer diagnosis may not be in an optimal psychological frame of mind to absorb complex information regarding risks and benefits of different treatment options. The concept of presenting the decision aid at the point in time utilized in this study is innovative and has clear clinical relevance. It will be interesting to see if some of the suggested benefits in this small study are borne out in the larger study. I believe this approach has real potential to change the standard of care and improve shared decision making for patients and providers facing this complicated decision.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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 have no financial conflicts of interest with this paper.

As far as non-financial conflicts, I am familiar with the work of several of the authors and have met a few of them at meetings, but I do not believe this is
unusual or in any way affects my ability to render an objective assessment of the work submitted for review.