Reviewer's report

Title: The effect of a decision aid intervention on decision making about coronary heart disease risk reduction: a randomized trial

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Reviewer: Hilary Bekker

Reviewer's report:

This article is clearly written with some novel findings exploring how the components of decision aids help to a) support informed decision making and b) mediate adherence to medication. I have some comments that are minor essential revisions:

1. In the methods, part of the decision aid evaluation was to complete an additional question asking participants to rate their intention to engage in CHD risk reduction. Some may argue that this statement is similar to goal setting, an active ingredient in behaviour change interventions. It may be that encouraging patients to complete this rating at the end of a decision aid helps them to link their informed decision with their motivation to change/ adhere, without compromising the validity of the decision aid.

2. In the discussion, the authors state that researchers should consider making decision aids more effective in promoting use and adherence to effective treatment strategies. This statement is controversial. There is an argument that in contexts where there is a clinically effective option, decision aids should enable informed decision making and increase adherence, i.e. both measures of effectiveness should improve. However, this does not mean that decision aids should be turned into behaviour change interventions. The authors need to clarify this point and, perhaps, reframe it, illustrating the way they designed the intervention was informed by different theories and we don't know what effect the tailored messages would have had if they were introduced into the decision making process sooner (e.g. biasing).

3. Use full terminology for CHD in the first sentence in the introduction.

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 declare that I have no competing interests'