Title: A Decision Aid for COPD patients considering inhaled steroid therapy: development and before and after pilot testing

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Author's response to reviews: see over
May 3, 2007

RE: “A Decision Aid for COPD patients considering inhaled steroid therapy: development and before and after pilot testing”

Dear Dr. Saltman,

We appreciate the reviewer’s comment. We have addressed it and made the necessary clarification in the attached revised manuscript. Please find below our detailed response to the comment.

This manuscript has not been published in another journal and is not under consideration by any other peer-reviewed media. It presents original work in which all the authors listed on the manuscript have contributed sufficiently to the project to be included as authors.

With kind regards,

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Reviewer: France Legare

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

The authors have responded to most of my comments. However, to my following comment: “My understanding was that in the present study, the researchers used the existing structure of an existing generic decision aid produced with the Ottawa Decision Support Framework but did not fully operationalise the framework itself,”, the authors responded that: “As clarified above, the ODSF is a theory for guiding patients making health or social decisions. Although it serves as a framework for developing decision aids, it does not include a generic decision aid. Our decision aid is unique in that it combines a number of features that prior or other decision aids to not include (e.g. the measurement of values and preferences and the decision making suggestion).”

I am not sure that I agree. I would advice the authors to review the Ottawa Personal Decision Guide (OPDG) that is designed for any health-related and/or social decision. This generic decision aid can help people assess their decision making needs, plan the next steps, and track their progress in decision making (see http://decisionaid.ohri.ca/decguide.html).

We thank the reviewer for the comment. We have tried to further clarify this issue and added the following two sentences to the “development of the decision aid” section:

“(1) Structural development: the structure of the DA follows the Ottawa Decision Support Framework (DSF) [14] and is based on the Ottawa Personal Decision Guide (OPDG) [15].”

“The Ottawa Personal Decision Guide (OPDG) is a generic decision aid designed for any health-related and/or social decision. It helps people assess their decision making needs, plan the next steps, and track their progress in decision making. However, it does not include standardized guidance about how to include an interactive computer based interface, which was one of the aims of our project. Furthermore, opposed to the generic features of the OPDG we aimed to include different decision making models in the aid. The latter was another of our specific aims for this decision aid and the intended decision making process”

Thus, in developing the decision aid, we used many of the features of the OPDG. We developed it further by using a computer-based interactive format, integrating several decision making models and assessing patient values using a quantitative method. These features are reported in the results section and discussed in the discussion section.