Reviewer's report

Title: One-stop or full stop? The continuing challenges for researchers despite the new streamlined NHS research governance process

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Reviewer: Hal Swerissen

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Review for BMC Health Services Research

One-stop or full stop? The continuing challenges for researchers despite the new streamlined NHS research governance process

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This is a case study of the efficiency of recently introduced changes to the NHS research governance process. The title is appropriate. The question is well defined but narrow. It focuses primarily on the time taken to complete research governance procedures for multisite research studies and the implications of the delays found. The methodology was suitable for the study. The case study found that that research governance approvals for the study investigated, took considerably longer in England than in Scotland, that there was considerable site variation in the time taken for approval and that primary care trusts took particularly lengthy periods for approval to be obtained. The study commented appropriately on the implications of variability and delays in governance decisions for the implementation of research projects. The study comments somewhat speculatively on the reasons why this might be so, but without detailed investigation. It is worth noting this was a particularly extensive multisite research project and it was conducted early in the implementation of the new procedures. While the delays reported were significant and problematic, the authors need to more clearly address the question whether appropriate training and experience will result in appropriate predictability, timeliness and consistency or are the processes fundamentally flawed and in need of revision? Further, the study does not comment on the quality of the data gathering or decision making procedures and the quality of the outcomes of decision making. Timeliness is important, but it would be interesting to know whether the authors considered the quality of the decisions and advice they received useful or not. The study is generally well written, but needs tight copy editing to remove the occasional error.

Hal Swerissen

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I have no competing interests