Reviewer's report

Title: The effectiveness of clinical computerized guidelines in the process of care: a systematic review

Version: 1 Date: 23 June 2009

Reviewer: Paul Glasziou

Reviewer's report:

This is a systematic review of computerized guidelines that has identified and analysed the results of 45 primary studies. The search and quality assessment appear reasonable. The results suggest and interesting effect from inclusion in the workflow, which has an Odds Ratio of 17. However, I found it difficult to follow the results as there was little presentation of individual study results and univariate analyses. I have a number of suggestions that might make this more useful to the reader.

Major Suggestions

1. It would be helpful to provide a "forest plot" of the results of the individual studies (this does *not* need to have a pooled overall result). It may also be helpful to show these in the subgroups, particularly the "in workflow" "not in workflow" split, to get some idea of individual study effects and their heterogeneity.

2. I think there should be a table listing the studies and showing the quality criteria. I realise this is large (45 studies) but important for readers who will want to be guided to look at individual studies for picking up on systems.

3. The Discussion is weak currently. Tow things that would help are (a) to discuss the findings of previous reviews and what the current review adds, and (2) to discuss some of the implementation issues of the findings, e.g, some examples of what it measn to have the system in the workflow.

4. Related to this some previous systematic reviews are omitted, in particular Hunt's Cochrane Review (update of reference 14).

Some minor things:

5. The numbers should be rounded, eg the OR of 17.45 could be 17.5 and the CI 193.69 should be 193).

6. I would provide the list of databases searched in the abstract.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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 declare that I have no competing interests