Reviewer’s report

Title: Integrative care for the management of low back pain: use of a clinical care pathway

Version: 3 Date: 6 September 2010

Reviewer: Martin Underwood

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for asking me to look at this paper again. I think this is much improved. Crucially the change of title means there is less mismatch between title and contents.

The argument that there is much interest from scientists, administrators and providers in the programme persuades me that there may some merit in publication of this paper.

The amount of actual new empirical data presented in the paper remains limited. The authors allude to Tuckman’s stages of group development but have not provided any empirical data on how the group functioned in its decision making. Rather what is presented as results are the decisions the group made. Whilst these are of some interest they do not allow the reader to use this paper to understand how the group development and process of reaching consensus actually worked.

There is useful additional of material on the justification for the components of the intervention but there appears to be no theoretical framework underpinning the selection process. One is left with some nagging doubt that the components included happened to be those treatments with some evidence for effectiveness that were easily available. Some discussion of this area might be of interest – for example how the development of this intervention model does, or does not fit, within a theoretical model for development of complex interventions such as the UK MRC framework for complex interventions.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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