Reviewer's report

**Title:** Interventions to improve benzodiazepine prescribing, lessons from the past 20 years to guide future interventions

**Version:** 2 **Date:** 14 September 2010

**Reviewer:** Ashley Sohn

**Reviewer's report:**

Improving the use of benzodiazepines – Is it possible? A non-systematic review of interventions tried in the last 20 years

This well written manuscript compiles a collection of literature addressing interventions used to improve use of benzodiazepines. The authors describe their search strategy and eligibility criteria. They report the results of all studies and summarize key limitations and advantages employed by these studies. The authors conclude that a multi-faceted approach, one which includes prescribers as well as consumers, is important in developing an intervention to improve the use of benzodiazepines.

This was a very easy manuscript to read. The tables clearly articulate the important information drawn from each study and overall is very well organized. A few comments can be found below. The points outlines in the final section of the paper are very helpful and appropriate.

**Major Comments**

1. **Review Strategy:** Ovid and google scholar allow for the inclusion of articles that cite your selected articles. This allows for the authors to include three key pieces common in systematic reviews (two of which you already have): 1-articles selected from search, 2-articles selected from references of those papers in one, 3-articles that cite those found in one. Did more than one author review titles/abstracts/articles? If not, was there a method used to determine eligibility when opinions differed (perhaps a third author)? What was the percentage of studies requiring a second (or third) opinion? Because this is a non-systematic review, most of this will increase rigor but is not necessary.

2. It is mentioned that the references of articles were searched for eligibility. The 31 articles presented in the flow chart, and described at the bottom of page 6, do not appear to reflect any such references. The authors should clearly indicate where the selected articles were chosen from.

3. **Consistency:** there are several areas in the paper (some mentioned specifically below) where sentence structure varies inconsistently. For instance, when two adjacent sentences use numbers, either numbers in both sentences should be written out (one, two, etc) or they should be in number form (1, 2, etc). Additionally, the format of table 2 does not match the format of table 1.
specifically the subheadings). The physical order of lists should be maintained throughout the paper. For example, the subheadings of education in table 1 vary from the order listed in the discussion.

4. Results in tables: Some of the results state specific degrees of change, while others merely report that a change was seen.

Minor Comments

1. Page 4, line 4 - there is an opening parenthesis that does not belong. I suggest rewording the sentence to say -using keywords (… etc) alone and in combination with anxi*- rather than repeat the same list twice.

2. Page 4, line 6 - missing the word “the”

3. Page 5, part C - maintain consistency in sentence structure similar to that of parts A and B. Use “ie” instead of “for example.” Also, the word “or” is needed before opioid users.

4. Page 5, summary measures - the first two sentences say the same thing.

5. Page 5, three lines up from the bottom - no comma is needed between ‘benzodiazapines’ and ‘to.’

6. Page 6, four lines from the top - “location” should not be capitalized

7. It appears there are four sets of headings in table one. Two of them include only the target of the intervention, while the other two (first and last) include all headings (study size, results etc). The insertion of different headings makes the overall appearance of this table weak. The headings could be bolded or in all caps.

8. Page 10, end of paragraph three - it is unclear how the authors draw the conclusion that “it does not matter which health professional delivers the education” from the information provided.

9. Page 11, lines 8-10 – This last paragraph/sentence is confusing and needs to be re-worded.

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