Reviewer's report

Title: Emergency Department Documentation Templates: Variability in Template Selection and Association with Physical Examination and Test Ordering in Dizziness Presentations.

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Reviewer: Sharon H Polensek

Reviewer's report:

Investigators Kerber et al., have conducted and presented a study which is novel and worthwhile to the field. The basic premise of the study is that template selection influences the likelihood of providers ordering CTs and examining for nystagmus. The question posed is well defined and pertinent in light of findings of recent studies which have highlighted the need for specific diagnostic tests in the approach to the dizzy patient or the lack thereof. Methods are appropriate and well described and the data is sound. One limitation of the study is the lack of analysis of template selection and subsequent ordering of CTs and examination for nystagmus according to specific provider. Although the authors point out this limitation in the discussion, in my opinion, omission of these data significantly weakens the argument of the paper as provider preferences and clinical practice approaches are likely to vary widely on the basis of training and experience, and thus influence the propensity of templates affecting process utilization. Any data or information which could be added pertaining to specific provider preferences would be a useful DISCRETIONARY CHANGE, although this may not be possible as the authors state in their discussion that the analysis was not adjusted for physician level variability because physician identifiers were not collected.

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISION: A change in wording is needed pertaining to the statement in the fourth paragraph of the discussion pertaining to patterns of nystagmus. This sentence is not correct as uni-directional horizontal nystagmus may indicate a central disorder. Some forms of nystagmus not mentioned by the authors are certainly more likely to be peripheral in origin, such as the finding of non-sustained upbeating torsional nystagmus beating in the direction of the dependent ear during positional testing for BPPV. The manuscript is otherwise well written overall and illustrations are clear and appropriate.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.