Reviewer's report

Title: Developing the specifications of a glaucoma screening intervention: A Delphi approach

Version: 2 Date: 10 February 2012

Reviewer: Alan Robin

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting manuscript describing a relatively novel approach to determine better screening algorithms for open angle glaucoma. The approach is novel and the information is important.

I have a few general and specific suggestions.

The authors may have misread the first reference. Although OAG is more common in the UK, its prevalence varies depending upon the region of the world. There are some areas where angle closure is far more prevalent (and in fact accounts for a disproportionate percent of blindness globally despite that is less prevalent in the Americas and Europe) and areas like Japan where normal tension glaucoma is more prevalent). Since the glaucoma specialists were from the UK, it might be best to change the title to include both “open angle glaucoma” and “UK”.

It would be preferable to better describe the glaucoma specialists. Age, gender, academic or private practice, years in practice, areas of research, prior publications on screening, disc analysis, perimetry.

The authors do not discuss the possibility of joint screening, which is in combination with screening for diabetes or diabetic eye disease. This should be considered.

A brief summary of a two-rounded Delphi survey might be helpful for a lay reader (more than on page 5).

Specific comments:

Page 2:
Line 2: What is “to inform policy”?
Lines 3-5: This sentence is awkward and should be rewritten.
Line 6: are these “expert clinicians” or “experienced glaucoma sub-specialists”?

Page 3
Lines 1-2: Awkward sentence, please rewrite.
Line 5: Should it be “opinions”?

Pages 4

Lines 3-4: This might be better states as “…asymptomatic until advanced stages of the disease….treatment can be relatively effective in reducing the rate of progression.” Also, the authors should reference EMGTS, AGIS, and CIGTS here.

Line 5: In other countries, it is NOT optometrists who do the primary detection. If that is the case within the UK, kindly supply a reference?

Line 8: The reference is NOT a prevalence study. There are multiple global prevalence studies from the developing nations (US [Baltimore, Beaver Dam, Los Angeles, New Mexico], Australia [Blue Mountains and Melbourne] and Europe (Rotterdam, UK, and Italy) all of which show that approximately 50 of glaucoma is undiagnosed. However, if this is a global issue, three separate prevalence studies in India have found that over 90% of people with glaucoma are undiagnosed.

Line 13: I would expand and also say in today’s health policy environment that it is both cost effective and beneficial.

Line 20: should read “…of screening tests”. Also, what does “organizational context” mean?

Line 22: this should read “(e.g., those with …)

Page 5:

Lines 1-5: I would start with the fact that screening is not diagnosis. A test much be relatively fast, easy to use, sensitive and specific and cost-effective.

Page 6

Lines 4-11: I am confused. Were the nurses and patients and technicians all experts in glaucoma care? Please explain. How were patients selected? Were these from all regions within the UK?

Line 16: The authors are missing much literature on screening and various other testing strategies. They should repeat their literature search.

Page 7

Line 22: Were these participant who chose these 8 combinations doctors, optometrists, household servants?

Line 23: What sort of bias does this asterisk give the study?

Page 8

Line 4: What percent of the original respondents reached the second round?
Page 9

First paragraph: I have many concerns here. The percent completion is far too low. All those who participated in the first arm did not participate in the second. How were respondents from other nations chosen: were they friends of some of the panelists or were they screening experts?

Also the data presented here and page 10 might better be presented in tabular form, with the results section highlighting the data.

**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 not competing interests