Reviewer's report

Title: Evaluation of the theory-based Quality Improvement in Physical Therapy (QUIP) program: A one-group, pre-test post-test pilot study.

Version: 2 Date: 5 November 2012

Reviewer: Annette Bishop

Reviewer's report:

Discretionary but my overall recommendation for this report.
1. Overall, this small study of a one group pre-test post-test design, using mixed methods, lends itself well to assessing the fidelity, acceptability and feasibility of the QUIP program. The authors clearly identify the limitations of the study and suggest that effectiveness would be better tested in a randomised design. My recommendation would be to present this study as a feasibility study and thus not place too much emphasis on the tests of effectiveness, but suggest these should be tested in a larger appropriately designed future study.

2. If this is presented as a feasibility study I would like to see the authors recommendations for a further larger study described to show what are the key messages learnt from this pilot.

3. However, if the testing of effectiveness is to be included here, the authors should add further comment on the likely impact of such a small sample size (n=24 or 25). Although overall adherence showed minimal change even descriptively some of the other determinants may have shown larger (and significant) effect sizes with a larger sample size. Inclusion of confidence intervals would be useful for the effect sizes.

Compulsory revisions
4. More information on the purposive sampling of practices should be included including an explicit description of the inclusion criteria. Were these practices typical practices or did they only take part because they were already very aware of quality management and guidelines?

5. Include a sentence to say how the clinical reasoning data was collected. Was the factor analysis to establish the individual and organisational determinants part of the previous study (ref 31)?

6. Clarify if the overall guideline adherence is a composite of the 12 quality indicators.

7. The qualitative findings presented were all positive. Were there any negatives? Particularly were there any problems with engaging physical therapists or practices in the many hours of the programme? This should link to the discussion as it is suggested the program was very brief and may need to more
comprehensive to cover all relevant aspects, but the burden of the individuals and practices would increase if the program was extended.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests