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: 16 December 2012

Reviewer: Deirdre Hurley

Reviewer's report:

This study presents a complex, multi-level evaluation of a pilot of the quality improvement in Physiotherapy Therapy (QUIP) program designed to increase adherence to the Dutch clinical guidelines for low back pain to evaluate its effectiveness, fidelity, acceptability and feasibility. It is topical and relevant to clinical guideline into practice implementation. The findings will be of interest to clinicians, managers and researchers.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Give specific details of the guideline being evaluated and how this study relates to the implementation strategy of the guideline. Also what level of implementation of the guideline was undertaken before the study commenced?

2. Provide further details of how the QUIP program elements were developed and the level of engagement between PTs, PQMs and the research team during the process.

3. Provide more details of the n values for each stage of the process, particularly the qualitative components.

4. Report the time involved in completing the various study measures for PTs and PQMs, the overall time frame of participation per practice and the time involved in each stage of the program.

5. Give postgraduate qualifications/additional post qualifying education of PTs in musculoskeletal area and how they relate to national profile. - Did this have any influence on their adherence?

6. Give more detail of the specific results of the qualitative components of the study.

7. Did the participants provide suggestions on refinement of the program?

8. Justify the study design in more detail given the limitations which are extensively discussed.

9. Discuss the relevance of guideline adherence in the context of clinical outcome.

10. Expand on the discussion of the feasibility of the program in terms of training required for its delivery, and time involved by clinicians and managers in participation.
Minor Essential Revision
Some missing words ie p5 first sentence insert 'a' before bridge; p8 paragraph 2, second sentence missing a fullstop after 'physical therapy'.

Discretionary Revisions
1. p10 - paragraph 3 first sentence - reduce number of abbreviations
2. Suggest a flow chart with time line of each stage of the process

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

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.