Reviewer's report

**Title:** Validation of Administrative Health Data for the Pediatric Population: A Scoping Review

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 28 February 2014

**Reviewer:** Jenine R Leal

**Reviewer's report:**

The authors conducted a scoping review to describe validation studies of administrative health data in the pediatric population. The background was well written and provided necessary information on administrative data and its validation, the gaps in literature around validation studies in the pediatric population and the rationale for doing a scoping review. The question posed by the authors was overall well defined.

The methods were well organized and described the approach for conducting a scoping review quite well. However, upon further reading of the manuscript there are improvements needed in the methods and discussion.

**Discretionary Revisions**

1. Two authors applied the study inclusion criteria to a random selection of studies in which agreement was calculated for two types of comparisons: whether authors both decided to include or exclude the study; and for data abstracted from the studies. For the latter it was not clear how the agreement was calculated for data abstracted. Were only a number of characteristics evaluated or was it the sum of characteristics abstracted etc.?

Please provide some information on how 'data abstraction' agreement was calculated and what was compared.

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

2. The authors describe that validation studies are characterized by their methods and outcomes, the latter of which includes sensitivity/specificity etc. However, the authors do not include any summary of the validity measures captured in the studies. Depending on the approach used in validation studies, not all measures are able to be calculated. Therefore, the authors should identify whether in fact measures of sensitivity/specificity/positive predictive value/negative predictive value or agreement measures were calculated.

3. Paragraphs 6 to 8 of the discussion section should not be included in the discussion. These paragraphs highlight two health conditions for which administrative data validation studies have been published in both adult and pediatric populations. The discussion should not be used to report additional study results that are not presented in the results section. For example, Tables 3 and 4 would not be appropriate to include in the discussion. If one of the goals
was to compare the pediatric studies identified with the adult studies for the same medical condition then that should be stated in the methods and outlined in the results.

I suggest the following:

3a. Remove paragraphs 6-8 from the discussion
3b. As part of the methods include validity measures for each study as part of the data abstracted
3c. Remove Tables 3 and 4 that compare adult validation studies for particular conditions with the included pediatric validation studies
3d. Re-focus discussion in this section to address differences in validity measures among the pediatric studies and where there are adult validation studies available for similar conditions, discuss overall the major differences or similarities.

Level of interest: An article of importance 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