Reviewer's report

Title: Can surveying practitioners about their practices help identify priority clinical practice guideline topics?

Version: 2 Date: 12 December 2003

Reviewer: Paul Shekelle

Reviewer's report:

This is a paper that I have reviewed previously and describes the results of a survey of practitioners regarding their views about the usefulness of a clinical practice guideline and their specific responses to three clinical vignettes. This paper is very responsive to past concerns, and at this point, I have only two minor issues left. First is in the first sentence of the Results where they are describing the participant sample. In the sentence that says 197 surveys were sent and 122 were returned, then in parentheses they list the practitioners by specialty giving the numbers 7, 126, 11, 40, and three, I am unclear what these are suppose to refer to since they add up to neither 122 nor 197, those being the two numbers mentioned previously in the same sentence. I would think the most useful number for readers would be the medical specialties of the respondents, so that these numbers should sum to 122. Presumably, these data are going to reveal that this survey is essentially about neurologists since they will comprise two-thirds or so of the sample. My only other comment is in the last sentence of the first paragraph of Discussion where the authors are talking about the limitations of self-reported data and response bias. To say the words "could not" is pretty strong. I think this would be better phrased that these potential limitations "are unlikely to account" for the variation reported.