Reviewer's report

Title: A pilot study of a new system for grading the quality of evidence and the strength of recommendations

Version: 1 Date: 9 April 2004

Reviewer: M Bigby

Reviewer's report:

General
The results of this pilot study are too preliminary to be useful to readers. More complete participation of all 17 investigators is needed. The levels of agreement need to be quantitated with Kappas. The method needs to be compared to existing methods. Understanding how the “evidence profiles” were produced is essential and the process is not detailed in the paper.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

P3 It is impossible to know what was done reading the abstract.

P4 The process of developing the system needs to be described in more detail.

P5 The procedure for developing “evidence profiles” should be detailed.

P7, 11 Greater participation by the investigators is needed.

P8- The levels of agreement need to be defined and kappas calculated.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Reject because too small an advance to publish in any journal

Level of interest: Too insignificant to warrant publication in any journal

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

none