Reviewer's report

Title: Trends in provision of photodynamic therapy and clinician attitudes: a tracker survey of a new health technology

Version: 1 Date: 1 February 2005

Reviewer: David Barnett

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an interesting study carefully carried out using methodology previously published and validated by these authors. It identifies the perhaps unsurprising finding that local 'peer' pressure' has greater influence on clinical practice than the actions/opinions of others seemingly more distant to the clinicians area of practice. The worrying negative is the equal lack of impact of both the RCOphth and NICE. I suspect that this is in part related to the protracted NICE appraisal process for this technology and the very robust media and other campaigning approaches of patient/carer groups and the industry.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
I do not think there is any need for major revision

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

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

The most significantly important aspect of the introduction of PDT into British Ophthalmology in recent years is the establishment of the National Surveillance Programme catlysed by the work of NICE and the actions of the RCOphth. This approach is unique internationally and an excellent example of working together between the Department of Health, the RCOphth and the technology sponsors. The importance of this approach means that the next survey relating to the impact and uptake of NICE guidance in this area, promised by the authors (and likley to be well under way by now) is really what we want to know about. It is arguabllly more interesting than the current study results which are relatively unsurprising. I would encourage the authors to carry out the next phase and possibly delay this publication until those results can be included. This would provide a more rounded and complete set of the data to inclde the last and probably most important chapter in this progression of surveys.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests