Reviewer's report

Title: Impact of case management by advanced practice nurses in primary care on unplanned hospital admissions: a controlled intervention study

Version: 2 Date: 8 October 2007

Reviewer: roberto bernabei

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COMMENT

The aim of this study was to determine the effect of advanced practice nurse case-management on unplanned medical and geriatric hospital admission rates in patients over 50, and admission risk in a 'higher risk' sub-group of patients in the UK.

1. I have concern about the study sample. It is not enough clear the method of randomization. Please specify how the intervention group and control group were constituted. It is important to addressed (in the discussion section too) that the randomization of nurses (case manager) districts is not the same of subjects’ randomization.

2. It is not completely clear the characteristic of the sample studied. We lack any information about the cognitive and affective status, as well as functional and physical performance.

3. Any comprehensive geriatric assessment tools/scales were used ?

4. I have concerns about methodological weaknesses such as confounding and bias. In particular, the analyses are not adjusted for potential confounders (such as functional status, comorbidity, acute illnesses, cognitive status, affective status, drugs uses, etc.)

5. Minor comments: the introduction section is not update regarding the evidence of the impact of case management; the Tables are really not enough clear and the format seems not appropriate for the Journal.

6. The author lack to quote important reference in the field of case management for elderly subjects:

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.