Reviewer’s report

Title: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of the effects of Clinical Pathways on length of stay, hospital costs and patient outcomes

Version: 2 Date: 10 October 2008

Reviewer: Suzanne Richards

Reviewer’s report:

I thank the authors for their comprehensive response to the peer-review comments received. I have checked the major/minor essential revisions I submitted in my previous peer-review and they have been adequately addressed in the text.

I have noted a few additional essential minor revisions which have arisen due to the extensive editing process (listed below).

Minor essential

Pg 10. ‘evidence for meting’. Change ‘meting’ to ‘meeting’.

Pg 14. ‘= 60,9)’. Replace comma with decimal point.

Pg 16. ‘study data resulting in a divers set of included studies’. Should ‘divers’ be ‘diverse’?

Table 1: The editing has resulted in a much clearer table. However you still need to change ‘(N/n)’ to ‘(n/N)’ as this reflects the order in which you presented the data in the pathway and control group columns. The legend is also in a different, much larger font than the table – I would shrink it to match the table. Change ‘data was’ to ‘data were’.

Discretionary revisions

Page 11. ‘studies, whereas we excluded 49 out of’. Suggest re-word to: ‘studies, excluding 49 out of’.

Pg 13. ‘Table 3 details the cost differences in detail’. Replace ‘details’ with ‘describes’.

Table 3 & 4: Format of legend different from table. Consider standardizing font.
Table 4: The use of full stops in some records (e.g. Grines et al, experiment group = $8.161) but not others (e.g. Kim, control group, $1512). Review table, and consider standardizing use of '.'

**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