Reviewer's report

Title: Interventions designed to improve the quality and efficiency of medication use in managed care: a critical review of the literature - 2001-2007

Version: 1 Date: 19 November 2007

Reviewer: Bernard Vrijens

Reviewer's report:

General

The manuscript is well written and constitutes a nice follow-up to its previous version. It is concise and provides a good overview of the literature.

In the discussion, the authors point the poor methodology used in the different studies identified in their research. They also stress that the quality decreased since their last review. I fully agree with their conclusion. Their estimate of poor quality is however mainly based on study design issues. I suggest that they mention also the major problem of poor MEASUREMENT of adherence to prescribed drugs among ambulatory patients. Reliable and continuous assessment of drug exposure should be pointed as a key methodological issue.

Accurate measurement of dosing histories constitutes the basis for successful intervention intended to improve patient adherence. What can be measured, can be managed! In this context it could be useful mentioning in the discussion other methods/technologies employed outside the U.S. managed care setting that has shown promise for improving drug adherence. For example the recent paper entitled “Effect of intervention through a pharmaceutical care program on patient adherence with prescribed once-daily atorvastatin (Pharmacoepidemiology and drug Safety 2006; 15: 115–121) constitutes a nice example of such an intervention and supports the idea that there appears to be value in a greater role of the pharmacist.

Finally I would suggest that the authors classify the intervention methods according they are directed at reducing short term costs (e.g., tiering strategies that might have adverse impact on adherence) or long -term costs (i.e., strategies to increase adherence).

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

None

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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)

In the manuscript and especially in the discussion, I would suggest to avoid the over use of the possessive term "our": "our review", "our findings", "our intensive efforts", "our understanding", etc.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Would be useful to define “interrupted time series analysis” more formally

**What next?:** Accept after minor essential revisions

**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