Reviewer’s report

Title: A cost-utility analysis of nursing intervention via telephone-follow up for injured road users

Version: 2 Date: 20 January 2009

Reviewer: Alyn Lewis

Reviewer’s report:

My outstanding concerns are as follows:-

In the response to my previous issue regarding the design, the authors made it clear that consent of participants followed randomisation (which is unusual) – and that this was a limitation of the size of the study and it’s design. The justification put forward is not entirely convincing and certainly merits a full and clear description of the process in the text (not only in the response to me). The limitations, particularly the biases, that may be associated with the studied cohort of participants, need to be explicit in the Discussion section of the manuscript.

An explanation of why a 3-month follow up was not included for the control group should be added to the text. I’m not sure I follow the response that the intention was to keep the control group “clean”.

In the last response, the authors state that the nurse costs were derived via the Vasterbotten county council. This fact and the exact unit cost (i.e. mean wage per hour) need to be stated in the text, for increased transparency of the data.

Given that the number of participants is imbalanced between study groups, I feel that the more appropriate measure of estimation for the differences in cost and QALYs – and the incremental cost-effectiveness ratio – is to present mean differences (rather than summed values). Mean differences in EQ-5D are presented in Table 3, which are fine. The authors present confidence intervals for the mean difference in QALYs, but should also add confidence intervals for the mean costs (in Table 2). Clearly, the sensitivity analysis may need adjusting given the extra interval limits associated with the CIs for cost.

I think the authors should acknowledge in the Discussion section that because the evaluation focused on a narrow perspective (i.e. that of healthcare alone), it was not able to evaluate the wider societal impact of the nurse intervention e.g. the impact on reducing work loss and productivity costs.

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.