Reviewer’s report

Title: Prioritization strategies in clinical practice guidelines development: a case study

Version: 1 Date: 13 October 2009

Reviewer: Antonio Garcia-Romero

Reviewer’s report:

This is an original piece of work carried out to validate a methodology for priority determination guidelines of clinical practice guidelines. However, it needs substantial revision before it could be considered for publication. I recommend that the authors consider rewriting this paper providing a good analytical framework.

Major compulsory revisions.

1) The work must be described adequately. In particular, the introduction is not clear; the methodology is poorly described; and the data analysis section should be improved. Besides, the structure of the paper seems to be atypical for a research paper.

2) The methodology section needs to be properly structured. Besides, authors must include basics elements as number of individuals that participate in the study, inclusion and exclusion criteria. The current version does not help to understand how this study has been carried out.

3) It would be very useful if a conceptual framework of this study is provided. The schematic diagram included as Figure 1 is not very helpful. By the way, this diagram is not referred in the text.

4) Regarding the methodology section, you should include the standard elements (e.g. sampling, data collection method, analysis). You must improve the description of how you constructed your sampling frame and how you decided to contact 60 stakeholders, etc.

5) Analysis. When you mention the qualitative analysis you talk about the instrument and how it was distributed among participants. First, I think these topics must appear in the methods section. Besides I wonder where is the instrument?, How many participants received it? As regards the “Statistical analysis of data” how have you determine the sample size? Second, the paragraph “Factorial Analysis” that you include in the result section should be appear in the methods section. A clear description of how data were analyzed is needed.

6) In order to analyse qualitative data (E.g. survey data), I recommend you use Correspondence Analysis instead of Principal Component Analysis. I strongly
recommend that the authors seek an advice from a qualitative data analyst.

7) One of the key elements of your study is a systematic review that has been conducted by your group and it is already published. However, the reference you include reveals that the study still has not been published as a peer review paper. This must be corrected and/or justified.

8) Tables and graphs must be improved. For instance, the Figure 2 is not clear and the Figure 3 presents an order of categories different from the used in your scale.

Minor Essential revisions

1) There are more minor corrections that I consider not relevant at this moment. A fully new version should be written in order to be considered for publication in this journal.

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.