Reviewer's report

Title: Are reviewers suggested by authors as good as those chosen by editors? Results of a rater-blinded, retrospective study

Version: 1 Date: 25 March 2006

Reviewer: David Moher

Reviewer’s report:

General

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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)

Page 4, Introduction. The paragraph starts with “Identifying reviewers..”. Insert “peer” between ‘identifying reviewers’.

Page 4, Introduction (end of first paragraph). Define “tone”.

Page 5, Methods, first line. The authors indicate that they sampled across the BMC series of journals. In the results section they should report the results of the sampling. For example, which journals were included in the sample (and what fraction by journal). They should also report on how long it took to gather up the sample of 100 submissions.

Page 5, RQI. The authors need to report how they compiled the overall score for this scale.

Page 6, Statistical analysis. Delete “to allow use of t-tests. Throughout the results section the authors report p values. These should be replaced with 95% confidence intervals (including Table 1).

Page 7, Results. Throughout the results section the authors state (for example) “There was no difference….”. All such statements should be replaced with “There was no statistically significant difference....”.

Page 7, Results, last sentence. Not sure what the authors are saying here. This sentence needs to be clarified.

Page 7, Discussion. The authors need to add a limitations section or paragraph.

Page 9, Discussion (middle complete paragraph). The CONSORT Statement asks authors to present their results in the context of the totality of evidence. This is most adequately achieved by statistically pooling the results of available studies (). Although this report is not a randomized trial, I think the authors should seriously consider a similar approach here. It will enable readers to better gauge the results of this study in context with others.
Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**Which journal?**: Not appropriate for BMC Medicine: an article whose findings are important to those with closely related interests and more suited to BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making

**What next?**: Offer publication in BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making after minor essential revisions

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

**Statistical review**: No

**Declaration of competing interests**: I declare that I have no competing interests