Reviewer's report

Title: Legislation for trial registration and data transparency

Version: 3 Date: 6 May 2010

Reviewer: Amber Abrams

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The abstract is clearer now. The editors should be able to clarify the remaining small issues.
2. The conclusion is now concise and clear.
3. The grammar and flow are greatly improved. There are some moments of awkward wording still, but the editorial team should be able to solve the few issues.
   Example "...excluded drug Phase I trials..." should rather read "...excluded Phase I drug trials..."
   Also first paragraphs in subtopics "Legislation" and "Network" should be slightly re-worked for grammar and flow
4. The tone of the paper is much more positive - well done.
5. This point has been clarified. Discussion is more inclusive with a wider view - follow-up articles with discussion of how local efforts can translate into a global system would be useful, but I understand that the authors are limited in word count.
6. Thank you. This has been dealt with accordingly.
7. The general discussion of the need to register has improved, which deals with this without sensationalizing the issue in the context of US legislation - approach now seems more appropriate for the general theme of a global effort.
8. Yes - the paper now reflects a slightly more global perspective, but a more in-depth discussion of this may be useful for a follow-up piece, as again, word limitation means focus is not centered on this discussion
9. The authors have corrected areas where their information did not align with ICTRP. The authors respond to this comment with the following "second step to establish a network involving all countries which has ability to conduct clinical trials" which is confusing - do they mean that they are calling for a global network to conduct clinical trials? Or to register clinical trials? The paper has more clearly outlined the key events in the development of the clinical trial registration effort globally.
10. The re-write of this paper has made what seemingly appeared to be a confusion between registration and ethical oversight more clear. Due to their response below, I am not sure the authors understood fully my comment, but the
confusion is less of an issue in this version of the manuscript.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Yes. Thank you.
2. Yes. The discussion is minimal but again I understand the authors are limited in word-count.
3. Yes thank you.
4. Again due to limited word-count this issue could not be worked through as much as I think it should be. Ultimately the suggestion to create a global network has been made and is underway but a discussion of how to make this happen in depth has been lacking up to now.

Discretionary Revisions

1. You are correct that Simes was the first to publish on this . . .I was just concerned by the statement as it leant itself to a reading that might allow a person to think that Simes was the first to come up with the concept of a registry and we cannot know that . . .all we know is that he was the first to publish on it . . .but again, the statement is ultimately correct.

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