Reviewer's report

Title: Comparison of anticipated and actual control group outcome in randomised trials in paediatric oncology provides evidence that historically controlled studies are biased in favour of the novel treatment.

Version: 2
Date: 22 October 2014

Reviewer: Tim Morris

Reviewer's report:

Thank you. Most of my concerns have been adequately answered by the authors and I apologise for the points I had not thought through carefully (e.g. the decision to analyse each randomised question, which made sense when explained by the authors).

I have one remaining comment:

The reason for estimating the correlation between [observed - anticipated] and prognosis / numbers recruited / year of publication is now given, but should be in the methods rather than the discussion. Knowing the reason, it is not clear why correlations were used. Why would you not just fit a linear regression of [observed - anticipated] on prognosis, numbers recruited and year of publication?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests