Reviewer’s report

Title: The QICKd study protocol: a cluster randomised trial to compare quality improvement interventions to lower systolic blood pressure in chronic kidney disease (CKD) in primary care [ISRCTN56023731]

Version: 1 Date: 5 March 2009

Reviewer: Bruno Cianciaruso

Reviewer’s report:

With the present protocol the authors face one of the most relevant health care problems of the next decade: the optimal management of CKD in primary care. The study-protocol is very complex and well designed, however, there are few Minor Essential Revisions:

1. It is not clearly stated how the study will be funded, the cost analysis of the study is lacking and it is not clear wether the physicians will receive incentives.

2. The primary outcome of the study is the reduction of systolic blood pressure. The study is powered to detect a mean 3 mmHg difference in systolic blood pressure between the practice groups. The authors should clarify how this difference is related to the improvement of the quality of CKD management in primary care, how promotes the implementation of best practice and/or what links this primary outcome (surrogate)with the list of objectives of the study.

3. The authors state in the objective No5 that it will be possible to characterise the natural history of CKD, with longitudinal data registered prior to the study. In fact, they plan to retrieve data for the CKD patients up to 10 years before the start of the study. To this purpose the authors should report the prevalence of creatinine measurement (to estimate GFR) or albuminuria, registered in CKD patients in the past 10 years, in a small sample of practices participating in the protocol, in order to show the feasability of this objective.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'