Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Improvement of primary care for patients with chronic heart failure: a study protocol for a cluster randomised trial comparing two strategies.

**Version:** 3  **Date:** 14 December 2010

**Reviewer:** Petra Denig

**Reviewer’s report:**

The authors have addressed most issues raised, and made clear that several choices have been made because of pragmatic reasons. These are now also mentioned in the discussion. I have one remaining major comment:

Since adequate medication treatment is one of the key aspects/problems the intervention aims to address, I think the authors need to include/define a quality of prescribing evaluation as primary outcome. The proposed secondary outcome measure concerning 'medication during the study period, based on the patient registration forms providing information on drug prescriptions’ is not a clearly defined measure.

I do not think that pragmatic reasons for not including such a well-defined outcome measure are valid. The authors claim that there is 'no such measure available for quality of prescribing', implying that there are no relevant-valid/responsive/composite measures for the quality of prescribing. This is not true, since several 'guideline adherence indexes' have been developed and applied in the field of CHF (see for example Komajda e.a. Eur Heart J 2005, Pont e.a. Eur J Heart Fail 2003, Sturm e.a. Pharmacoepi Drug Safety 2007, Oertle e.a. Qual Safety Health Care 2010). They can be easily 'translated' to cover the current CHF guideline treatment recommendations for primary care.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

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

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.