Reviewer’s report

Title: WHAT’S THE UPTAKE? Pragmatic RCTs may be used to estimate uptake, and thereby population impact of interventions, but better reporting of trial recruitment processes is needed.

Version: 0 Date: 25 Apr 2017

Reviewer: Catalin Tufanaru

Reviewer's report:

The most important terms/concepts used in the article ('effectiveness of interventions', 'efficacy of interventions in trials', 'trial effect', 'trial efficacy estimates', 'population level effectiveness' etc.) are not defined. No conceptual definitions and operational definitions are provided. The article is characterized by ambiguity and imprecision.

My main concern is that you talk about 'the efficacy of the intervention in trials (trial effect)', however, it is not explained what exactly this 'trial effect' is. It is not clear what kind of statistical estimate is used for this 'trial effect'.

My understanding is that there are different statistical estimates of effects in trials (treatment effect on those treated, intention to treat, etc.). You don't cite the statistical literature on different statistical estimates of effects in trials and you don't provide an operational definition in statistical terms for what you labeled as 'trial effect' and 'trial efficacy estimates'. There is a large body of statistical literature about diverse statistical estimates of effects in trials (such as the effect of the treatment on the treated, intention to treat, etc.) and the issues related to the effects in trials and in populations (for example, scholarly works by Joshua Angrist, Guido Imbens, Donald Rubin, Howard Bloom, Alexander Balke, Judea Pearl, Constantine Frangakis, Stephen Cole, Elizabeth Stuart, Jay Kaufman, Charles Poole, Herbert Weisberg, Alfred Sommer, Scott Zeger etc.).

No explicit, clear, reasonable justification is provided for your estimation method.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No
Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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