Reviewer’s report

Title: Outcome choice and definition in systematic reviews leads to few eligible studies included in meta-analyses: A case study

Version: 0 Date: 13 Sep 2019

Reviewer: Myzoon Ali

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript highlights the issue of data aggregation for meta-analyses and secondary data analyses, and calls for the use of Core Outcome Sets. The manuscript could be strengthened slightly by making a clearer overall argument about research waste, cost of research, the benefits of re-using data for meta-analyses and secondary data analyses, the clinical impact of not having an adequate evidence base for therapeutic intervention, and the need for international collaborative and strategic working to make sure that everyone is pulling in the same direction (avoidance of duplication of effort, use of outcomes that are not validated, making new, untested outcome measures, etc).

In order to increase readability, I would suggest reducing the number of brackets used. The algorithm for defining the main outcome measure is beautifully explained in the table, but the corresponding text needs to make clearer reference to this method.

There is a minor typo on page 9, line 35 where I think it should say "included" rather than "include".

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

Yes

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

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?  
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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.
Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Acceptable

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