Reviewer’s report

Title: Identification, description and appraisal of generic PROMs for primary care: a systematic review

Version: 0 Date: 28 Aug 2017

Reviewer: Kamal Mahtani

Reviewer's report:

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Thank you for giving me the opportunity to review this manuscript. In general, it makes a worthy addition to the literature on PROMs. The paper builds on previous work carried out by this group, specifically a qualitative study that provided a framework upon which to categorise the results of this systematic review.

However, I do feel there are a few points through which the paper could be improved on before it is considered ready for publication. I have outlined these below, and have categorised these as major and minor points.

Major points

I could not see a reference to a prior published protocol. If the authors have registered this systematic review on PROSPERO (or elsewhere), could they reference this?

The authors appear to justify the need for a systematic review by referring to the need for "research into existing instruments before development of new ones." However, this refers to a paper from 2002 (Garratt, A., et al., Quality of life measurement: bibliographic study of patient assessed health outcome measures. British Medical Journal, 2002). Are there any other examples that the authors can provide to justify this systematic review? For example, there are systematic reviews of PROMs in other clinical areas, often disease specific areas, if this is the first in primary care, perhaps the authors should be more explicit about this, making more of it.
The paragraph, beginning on line 30, needs a little more clarity. It begins by discussing the use of PROMS to evaluate and compare the effectiveness of healthcare interventions. The remaining part of the paragraph leans heavily on the need for PROMs in the changing face of primary care service delivery. I think that a little more detail and clarity is needed here. It is not immediately clear why the authors are referring to new models of care in UK general practice and the patient centred medical home in the US, as the majority of the paper refers for the need for a PROM for all of primary care. Which bit of primary care? The delivery and implementation? Does the title need to change to reflect this?

The authors appear to have only selected one main medical database (Medline Ovid SP) for conducting their search. They should be credited for seeking additional information from PROMS related databases, experts in the field, citations searching etc:

"(The Oxford University PROMs group database,[24] a review of three compilations of PROMs (McDowell,[25] Bowling,[26] PROQOLID[27]) and consultation with experts in the field. A backwards reference search was carried out on all twenty original papers included in the final review, and a forward reference search for sixteen of the twenty original papers."

However, they should consider providing more justification as to why one main database was thought to be enough in the methods. This is mentioned in the discussion, but I could not help but feel that some reference to this should be made in the methods.

On page 13, line 36, the authors highlight how their systematic review identified tools that are potentially suitable for measuring outcomes in primary care. Referring to my point above, do they want to be a little bit more explicit about what outcomes? If they mean all outcomes in primary care, then this should be reiterated to the reader, highlighting the originality of their work.

Could the authors provide more details about how this work fits in the translational pathway to providing better clinical care? I can see the benefits to other researchers (the point they have made) - perhaps a little more steer for the reader?

Minor points

The email addresses do not appear to correspond with the author name.

P6 line 11, should 'time' be plural?
More details about how the coding for the identified PROMs was done independently between the reviewers would be helpful in the methods section.

Taking on board the points mentioned above, I am recommending this work for publication.

End.

**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.

Unable to assess

**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

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