Reviewer’s report

Title: Does the implementation of a care pathway for patients with hip or knee osteoarthritis lead to fewer diagnostic imaging and referrals by general practitioners? A pre-post-implementation study of claims data.

Version: 2 Date: 25 Sep 2019

Reviewer: Gillian Hawker

Reviewer's report:

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Please overwrite this text when adding your comments to the authors.

Thank you for major revisions that have improved the manuscript - my major concerns and questions have been addressed.

One additional suggestion - I did not realize that the substudy was performed exclusively within the intervention arm where you examined outcomes for those whose GPs did versus did not follow the pathway, according to chart review - i would suggest this be made much clearer with a separate heading in the methods section and results - only once i got my head around that did i understand you were doing an analysis of patients seen and thus logistic regression made sense

Additional questions for your consideration:

within the sub-study of patients in the intervention arm, you examined the likelihood of receiving an arthroplasty at consult, and of being imaged or referred for consultation - you note on page 13 that you did not find any significant differences between groups whose GPs did vs did not follow the pathway - was statistical power sufficient to detect clinically meaningful differences?

finally, were there any contemporaneous interventions occurring, such as Choosing Wisely campaign, that might have influenced ordering of knee xrays?

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?
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Yes
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I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English  
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