Reviewer’s report

Title: The Integrated Care Pathway for Managing Post Stroke Patients (iCaPPSTM) in Public Primary care Healthcentres in Malaysia: Impact on Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALYs) and Cost Effectiveness Analysis

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Reviewer: Birgitta Langhammer

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The integrated care pathway for managing post stroke patients (iCaPPSTM) in public primary care healthcentres in Malaysia: impact on quality adjusted life years (QALYs) and cost effectiveness analysis

Abstract:
Background: P 6 l 15: please write out in full iCAPPS the first time it is mentioned.
L 5-9: this is not an aim nor a hypothesis and it is hard to understand what you mean. Could you please rewrite? I assume you mean "the aim with the current study was to undertake a cost effectiveness analysis of the implementation iCAPPS compared to conventional care post stroke , using the EQ-5D-5L"?
Hypothesis being that iCAPPS was cheaper…or at least not more expensive

Methods:
P 8 l 23: how was this possible? To blind them for type of intervention? Were they not informed of the aim of the study in accordance with ethics? Even though no standardized protocol used they still should be informed of the aim of the study?
L 9-13: it is difficult to understand what you did here? It seems you did some sort of selection? it is criteria for inclusion of health centres you are describing but I assume you invited different health centres to participate, I 13 since there seems to be somewhat wide approaches in consent?
L 20: exit visits????
L 21: please explain how many site investigators? How were they recruited? Who were they?
L 22: who is the researcher? Please describe inclusion / exclusion criteria for subjects, the intervention, who were site-coordinators / how were they recruited? Etc…
L 23 as for blinded I would not call this blinding- so I suggest to rephrase and start by saying that no standardized protocol for stroke care existed therefore the different clinics were allotted one of two types of protocols. But there were still possibilities for the centres to communicate between themselves and "discover" the differences…and you mention Conventional care so some sort of protocol must have existed?
Please insert sub-titles in the Methods section, it is very difficult to read….
P 11 l 14-15And there is a mixture of information presented, some should be presented elsewhere in the manuscript.

Results:
Why was there a difference in outcome measures and how these were scored / mapped?

Only 3 out of 10 hospitals provided financial records that weakens your results. And the fact that the centres were heterogeneous seriously influence the results.

The order of the tables are quite confusing and should be organized as they appear in the text. Overall, the texts in the headings should be more descriptive of content.

Discussion

You state that the cost was higher using iCaPPS but on you say the outcomes in terms of QUALYs was 72% higher? This seems odd? And contradictory when looking at table 9?

And since only 3 out of 10 hospitals participated and the hospitals services were heterogenous, a small difference in QUALYs may be by chance? Could you elaborate?

Tables are many and you should reconsider if some of the data could be presented in text and if all information is vital for this publication. And the text in the title should be as informative as possible, describing what data you are presenting.

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.

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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