Reviewer’s report

Title: Fake facts and alternative truths in medical research

Version: 0 Date: 20 Nov 2017

Reviewer: David Shaw

Reviewer's report:

This is a very interesting paper on an important topic but it is very brief and needs more much explanation in general - regarding background, but particularly on methods and results.

1. I'm familiar with the breast screening debate but many readers won't be - more explanation of the debate and context of it is required.

2. More explanation needs to be given of the attempted survey. The questions sent to the experts are interesting but all we are told is that they had trouble answering them. The questions seem easy enough to answer but we are not even told why they had trouble. Did all experts reply? What reasons did they give for having difficulty? Why are no results of that survey reported at all?

3. Two experts on polarised CoI were asked to rate the experts in terms of bias. No information is given about what evidence was used by these two experts to inform their ratings. Were the experts familiar with all the published works of the experts they were rating? If not, it hardly seems a fair or robust approach.

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

Unable to assess

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.

Unable to assess
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:

Acceptable

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