Reviewer's report

Title: The Impact of Interventions on Appointment and Clinical Outcomes for Diabetic Patients: A Systematic Review

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Reviewer: Danny Duke

Reviewer's report:

I am pleased to provide a review of the manuscript entitled “The Impact of Interventions on Appointment and Clinical Outcomes for Diabetic Patients: A Systematic Review” for BMC Health Services Research. The review article examines three primary aspects of facilitating diabetes care: 1) scheduling the patient with the provider, 2) getting the patient to the appointment, and 3) having patient information integral to their diabetes care available to the provider. The study identifies interventions that have been shown to improve appointment management and preparation, and patient clinical and behavioral outcomes. The topic of the manuscript is relevant and important to optimizing diabetes care. The manuscript was well organized; the methods were acceptable, as was the quality of the writing. Overall, I am left with a favorable impression of the article.

Following, I offer observations and comments with the aim of improving the manuscript.

Major: None

Minor:

1. The title includes the term “Diabetic.” There has been a general movement away from the use of such a defining label. In general, newer literature has moved toward the use of less defining terminology, such as “Individuals with Diabetes.”

2. On page 7, last paragraph, bottom of the page: The authors state that a meta-analysis of the data was not possible due to lack of uniform statistical analysis. This is a broad statement that is not, by itself, adequate reason for not conducting a meta-analysis. Rarely do studies within meta-analyses adopt a uniform methodology. It seems more likely that related issues made a meta-analysis impractical. Such as studies reporting insufficient information, such as mean changes, sample size, or not using a pre post design or control group? Maybe there were inadequate controlled studies representing each topic area? Please elaborate by providing the specifics, so the reader can better understand the author’s choice and interpret the findings. A meta-analysis would be the preferred method of analyzing and interpreting the results, if possible. The qualitative review left me uncertain regarding the effect sizes of interventions and thus uncertain how to best interpret the author’s recommendations. This is not a critical point, but a notable limitation of the study design that should be included in the “Limitations” section.
3. Conclusions, Page 21, first paragraph: The authors refer to a “...fissured health care delivery system.” Please elaborate, as this is an important aspect of modern U.S. care delivery that is intertwined with the focus of the manuscript and will be relevant to most readers. Issues may include reimbursement, time pressures, unbillable hours, etc. Who pays for the care manager included in the recommendations? Should the system be further changed/ improved? How?

Discretionary:

1. The Background section is adequate, but could be expanded to more strongly set up a rationale and the context of the study. As is, the introduction seems rather short and simplified. This is largely an editorial decision so I will not elaborate.

2. Overall, the writing is acceptable, but could use sharpening throughout. For example, page 5, 3rd paragraph: the authors state “However, accomplishment of diabetes management objectives can be challenging for a primary care providers during fifteen to twenty minute patient appointments.” This could be more clearly stated by reorganizing and using simpler language: For example, “Accomplishing diabetes care objectives during fifteen to twenty minute appointments can be challenging for primary care providers.” This is likely not the best example, but the purpose should be evident. Again, the writing is not a major flaw, but given the otherwise high quality of the article, editing for clarity and conciseness would benefit the manuscript.

3. I appreciate the authors were thorough in describing the methodology of their review.

4. The Tables were nicely constructed and become the primary avenue for interpreting the study results.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'