Reviewer’s report

Title: Age-treatment subgroup analyses in Cochrane intervention reviews: a meta-epidemiological study

Version: 1 Date: 06 Aug 2019

Reviewer: Fujian Song

Reviewer's report:

Thanks for the revised manuscript, and satisfactory response to most of my comments. I have two comments for your consideration:

1. It is helpful to have a simplified Table 1. While I am enjoying more while reading introduction and discussion sections, I found it is rather tedious to go through study results, not sure how many 'general clinical audience' could manage to understand these results.

2. I agree that it may be difficult to provide a complete framework for subgroup analysis in systematic reviews. However, it is crucial to distinguish the difference between within-trial and between-trial subgroup analysis in systematic reviews. This is no less important than interaction test, and could be added to Box 1. As a minimum, it should be made explicit that subgroup analyses in Cochrane reviews are mostly between-trial analyses. I suggest that you consult JAMA users' guides (how to use a subgroup analysis, Sun et al JAMA 2013), in which there is a section "subgroup claims in systematic reviews and meta-analyses: within- vs between-trial comparisons".

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

Yes

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If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Not applicable

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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Yes
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I am able to assess the statistics

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