Reviewer’s report

Title: Improving health promotion through central rating of interventions: the need for responsive guidance

Version: 0 Date: 11 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Helena de Carvalho Gomes

Reviewer’s report:

Dear Authors,

The paper addresses an interesting topic and reads well. It provides a good summary of challenges and pitfalls that one is faced with when trying to apply the evidence-based medicine/clinical guideline approach to more complex questions and situations. I enjoyed the reading, and have only few comments and suggestions for further improvement:

- For an international audience and for readers that are not familiar with the Dutch ERS it would be good to include a short description of the committee: i.e. its composition and way of working, how members are selected and by whom, how long they serve etc.; maybe an info-graphic showing the relation of the different players could help here.

- It is mentioned how many participants were interviewed but I miss the number of how many were approached in the first place, and by professional position, to obtain an idea on the response rate by profession/role; and where reasons collected and given for the ones that chose to not be interviewed? A sort of flowchart could help visualising how many were approached, how many responded, how many belonged to which group, and how many were active or former members of the ERS committee or had any form of double-role.

- I would wish to see a clearer description if the listed aspects and concerns were raised by all participants equally or if there were differences in type and importance given to the single aspects depending on the professional position and role in the ERS, and what that could mean for the future of the ERS and its committee.

- With the discussion of the 'responsive guidance' the paper goes beyond what is described in the abstract and background as the objective of the study. This needs to be adjusted. Also, are the terms 'quality guidance' and 'responsive guidance' used inter-changeably? It also remains unclear if the 'responsive guidance' approach is meant to be a proposal for a re-structuring of the ERS, and how it could look like and prove itself in practice; or - if not - who or what else would be in a more appropriate position to provide 'responsive guidance', and who should be the diverse 'experts' contributing to it, etc. It reads well but very theoretical. What could it be in practice? Are the authors planning any further work or research following this publication?

- I suggest to remove fig. 2, for two reasons: in my view it does not contribute to a better understanding of what is already described in the text on page 7; and it introduces the term
responsive guidance' (or is this a mistake in the heading of the figure?). In my view the term 'responsive guidance' does not belong to the results section which should be restricted to describing the findings.

- In the abstract it reads that the assessment of 12 interventions was observed, and one would expect to hear something about these 12 interventions later on which does not happen. I think what is meant is rather that two committee meetings were observed and recorded, and not the assessment of these 12 interventions as such. That these two meetings discussed 12 interventions is rather irrelevant for the purpose of this study (or am I wrong?). Btw - when did these committee meetings take place? This could be mentioned, too, as is the time period for the semi-structured interviews.

A couple of small mistakes caught my eye while reading:

- page 15, line 6: Something seems to be missing at the end of the line (empty brackets).

- Fig. 1: It should read 94 (and not 93).

Good luck with the publication and all the best for your future work.

**Level of interest**
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

**Declaration of competing interests**
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?
5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal.