Reviewer's report

Title: Guidelines for the use of survivorship care plans: A systematic quality appraisal using the AGREE II instrument

Version: 2
Date: 13 February 2015

Reviewer: Melissa Brouwers

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Manuscript: Guidelines for the use of survivorship care plans: A systematic quality appraisal using the AGREE II instrument

The authors are interested in understanding why cancer survivorship care plans are not being used. As a first step, they investigated the quality of CSPs. If the quality is poor, improving their quality may be first step to improving their adoption. If the quality is good, then efforts could be directed towards more interventional efforts to increase their adoption.

1. The quality of the research questions and the rationale underpinning them are solid and well presented.

2. The methods used execute the study are appropriate, comprehensive, and well presented. Specifically, while concise, the search strategy, eligibility criteria, data extraction strategy (including supplementary file), and analytical framework descriptions were sufficiently detailed to enable the reader to follow precisely what occurred. The modifications made to the AGREE II items to better align with the research context were well justified and described. So too were the criteria used to categorize the guidelines as strongly recommend, recommend and do not recommend.

3. The paper would be strengthened by linking the results back to the implementation science literature and the thesis of the paper – why are CSPs not being used. For example, while most guidelines were not recommended, a few were though not strongly. Are they good enough? Should efforts be directed to choose the best one or two candidates and optimizing those – from an implementation perspective, is that the best use of resources and effort? Could an effort be integrated into a larger quality improvement agenda – can the implementation science speak to this more directly? The intent of the paper is not simply to provide a summary of the quality of CSPs, but rather, how quality of CSPs may provide clues to why their adoption is not optimized. How does this study advance the research enterprise? How could these data be used to inform future questions?

4. The writing is excellent. Tables and figure are appropriate and informative.

Major Compulsory Revisions.
Link the results back the literature and the aim of the paper. See comment 4 above for a summary of the issues.
Minor Essential Revisions.
Please add the database search strategies (perhaps an appendix), if available. It would be useful for anyone who may wish to update the search CSPs in the future.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I was the principal investigator of the AGREE II, the instrument used to appraise the guidelines reported in this paper.