Reviewer's report

Title: Updated clinical guidelines experience major reporting limitations.

Version: 0 Date: 19 Jul 2017

Reviewer: Janet Long

Reviewer's report:

Thanks for the opportunity to review this paper. It is an assessment of methods, presentation and editorial independence of Clinical Guidelines that were updated in 2015 using a tool called CheckUp.

The structure is clear and very succinct and builds on previous published work on the development of the tool. A slightly longer introduction about evidence for the need for the tool would have framed it better for a IS audience. It is not hard to make a clearer case for clinicians are finding it harder than ever to keep up with new clinically actionable research. At the same time, resources such as updated CGs specifically designed to help to do this are often viewed with scepticism by clinicians. The reasons for this are multifaceted but one, it could be argued, is the lack of a standard methodology to develop and update CGs.

This tool may go some way to demonstrate / test the rigour used in updating particular clinical guidelines and if used by the developers themselves, could bring a welcome standardisation to the work. I am not convinced that the tool will be used by clinicians as suggested in the second paragraph of 4.5 as it is too labour intensive. I would think that professional bodies who write and update CGs would be the natural target and, as you say, for them it could provide a gold standard.

It appears to be a very straightforward process and I congratulate the authors on a comprehensive yet fairly easy to use tool. The 10-point scale is useful. The inter-observer reliability is excellent so I wonder at your caution that three reviewers be used. Maybe a sentence explaining why?

I had trouble reading Figure 2 as the resolution on screen was too low.

All the best for your future research,

JL

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

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
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 organization 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