Reviewer’s report

**Title:** What's in your wallet? A cluster randomized trial of the effects of showing comparative patient out-of-pocket costs on primary care prescribing for uncomplicated hypertension.

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 19 Sep 2017

**Reviewer:** Atle Fretheim

**Reviewer's report:**

This a well written report on the conduct and findings of an interesting study.

I have relatively few critical points to make - here they are:

* The authors consistently employ the term "significant" in the statistical sense of the word. This is potentially confusing, and can even come across as non-sensical, e.g. in their conclusion-section, where they state that their intervention "resulted in a significant but modest impact. They should, in my opinion, add "statistical" before "significant", whenever they use the term in this sense. In the abstract I think they should write "had a modest impact" rather than "ha a significant impact".

* In their description of the intervention software package, I get the impression that the physicians had to justify whenever they decided not to switch a patient over to a thiazide, but did not have to justify when the chose not to start a new (incident) patient on a thiazide. This is contrary to what I would have guessed. Is it correct?

* The claim that physicians were blinded to the outcomes seems hard to believe. Didn't they realise that you were testing new software, and that the new software concerned promoting the use of thiazides? Even if this wasn't explicitly communicated to the participating doctors, they must have realised that this was the case?

* "There was also no difference in the overall annual costs or out of pocket costs…” I think A) you should avoid using the phrase "no difference" (since you probably mean a statistically non-significant difference, which is not the same as "no difference"), and B) you should report the actual figures.

* From reading the Discussion-section I get the impression that you - in retrospect - probably should have user tested the software more extensively than you did. I find no description of the user testing. I think you should address this, as a minimum in the Discussion.

* I see no mention of a study protocol. The emphasis you put on subgroup analyses makes me wonder to what extent these subgroups were pre-specified. I tend to think that the authors are
putting a but more weight on the subgroup analyses than I find reasonable, but I guess it's OK if they were pre-specified AND all pre-specified sub groups are reported in the manuscript. If they were not pre-specified, I would want you to tone down the subgroup results, quite a lot.

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