Reviewer’s report

Title: Defining the gap: A systematic review of the difference in rates of diabetes-related foot complications in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non Indigenous Australians

Version: 1 Date: 30 Jul 2017

Reviewer: Peter Lazzarini

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to re-review this really nice systematic review on the prevalence of diabetic foot complications in indigenous compared with non-indigenous populations in Australia. Again I congratulate the authors for the paper and now also for comprehensively addressing my specific revision comments from my original review. Overall the paper reads very nicely now and from my perspective the paper is nearly there. However, there are a handful of discretionary and minor revisions that remain that I think the authors still need to reflect on that I think are important to the paper. Once the editors feel these revision comments below have been satisfactorily addressed I would be more than happy to see this paper published in JFAR and I really look forward to citing it in future. Again may I say well done to the authors for undertaking this really important piece of work.

Abstract

1. Terminology: This is at the discretion of the authors, but I note you use both the terms "indigenous" and "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders" in the abstract to mean the same population. If the term "indigenous" is permissible it would make the paper easier to read if it were able to be used consistently throughout the paper as it would mean one word instead of five words is used each time to describe the primary population of this paper. However, again please continue to use the term "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" if this is the more culturally appropriate term as this is not my area of expertise.

2. Results: Just be careful with "up to" in your Odds Ratios as that could mean 0 up to 3.7. I realise it can be a little difficult to display but perhaps simply just display a range of Odds Ratio reported by the different studies without confidence intervals, e.g. from my read of Table 3 it could be simply 'and amputation (OR range: 3.1 - 6.2)'

3. Conclusion: Again I'd suggest reporting a range in the first sentence for diabetes-related foot complications would be more useful and actually more accurate than what you currently have as "5 fold". For example, looking at your new Table 3 (which is great by the way and well done) it looks like 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have 3-6 fold
increased odds of having diabetes-related foot complications' or something would be much more useful and technically accurate than "5 fold"

Methods

1. Data sources: I am happy you have corrected that reports were not eligible for inclusion now in the methods "No language, publication date or publication status restrictions were used but only original published articles from academic journals were eligible for inclusion.", however, it is still confusing when the next paragraph leads with "Published reports ….. were eligible for this review". Perhaps just use "Studies" instead of "published reports" throughout to denote the papers that were eligible so its not confusing to the reader.

Results

1. Rates of foot complications: Thank you for including Table 3 as it makes the findings much easier to read. However, I feel you haven't made enough of this Table in your results. At present Table 3 is only mentioned in the first paragraph of the Discussion. As these are results to me this needs to be in results at the very least; however, this is the results section where you probably should report the OR ranges for your foot complications as well so the reader can quickly scan them in the results and understand your findings as per my comments re: your abstract. Plus you have reported (and rightly so) your Table 3 findings in the results of your abstract.

Discussion

1. First paragraph: As per point above, need to have Table 3 reported in Results and not mentioned in Discussion for the first time

2. Conclusion: As per point 4 in the conclusion it would be more useful (and accurate) to report the range of increased odds for diabetes-related foot complications rather than a 'flat figure' of 5 which isn't quite accurate, ie I would suggest from my read of Table 3 this is 3-6.

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 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.

As per previous declaration for this manuscript.

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.