Reviewer's report

Title: Self-declared stock ownership and association with positive trial outcome in RCTs with binary outcomes published in general medical journals- a cross-sectional study

Version: 0 Date: 11 May 2017

Reviewer: Vance Berger

Reviewer's report:

It is stated that conflicts of interest are being investigated, and yet it appears that instead you are investigating only declarations of conflicts of interest, which are not the same thing. Are you familiar, for example, with the JAMA debacle with Dr. Jonathan Leo?


So did you do any investigating into undeclared conflicts of interest, or did you just take the authors are their word, blindly trusting them to always tell the truth? The reality is that in general there are far too many positive outcomes that are not rooted in fact. This is true whether there are obvious conflicts of interest or not, since even the ones that are not obvious, or are not even financial, still cause investigators to cheat so as to skew the results. You are comparing bad trials to bad trials. What, then, can you conclude if you find no difference?


Also, it says that you accepted as randomized and trial that made the claim. This is far too lenient an approach, as many trials claim to have randomized yet in fact did not:

Berger, VW, Bears, J (2003). "When Can a Clinical Trial Be Called 'Randomized'?", Vaccine 21, 468-472.
**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

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All images and figures within the manuscript should be genuine i.e. without evidence of manipulation. No specific feature within an image may be enhanced, obscured, moved, removed, or introduced. If you have concerns about the veracity of the figures you should choose the first option below.

**Statistical review**

Is it essential that this manuscript is seen by an expert statistician? If so, please give your reasons in your report.

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