Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Progression Criteria in trials with an internal pilot: an audit of publically funded randomised controlled trials

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 27 Apr 2019

**Reviewer:** Lehana Thabane

**Reviewer’s report:**

This is well written paper describing the continuation criteria used in trials with internal pilots funded by the NIHR HTA programme along with providing some specific examples of good progression criteria by some of the trials. Overall the paper is well written. The design and the reporting seem well done. Here are some minor suggestions:

1) Abstract: Results: My view of this study is that it represents an analysis of sample of eligible studies and therefore the estimates need to include measures of precision. Therefore, I recommend adding 95% Confidence Intervals for the estimates as appropriate.

2) Abstract: Results: There is reference to the red/amber/green structure in the results, but this has not been defined.

3) Abstract: Conclusions: Delete "in popularity" -- it is duplicated.

4) Analyses: State software and version used for analyses.

5) Table 1: Title: Replace "Demographic" with "Characteristics" and consider adding the sample size "n=XX" in the title.

6) Figure 7: Both the X-axis and Y-axis seem to be reporting the percentage, rather than the proportion. Please revise label appropriately.

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An article of importance in its field

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