Reviewer's report

Title: Addressing identification bias in the design and analysis of cluster-randomized pragmatic trials: a case study

Version: 0 Date: 09 Sep 2019

Reviewer: Sally Kerry

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This is an interesting idea but I think it could be better developed with more supporting data or simulation.

The definition of identification bias used here is specific to this situation and may take other forms elsewhere. Identification bias is simply where knowledge of the intervention arm may influence the identification of individuals.

In the end the researchers chose a recommended approach which is to use all those diagnosed pre-randomisation and hence they chose not use any novel approach. It isn't clear that this choice was based on the graphs provided or how these graphs would be used in practice.

I would like to have seen more data from the studies or other studies to assess the likely effect of the different options.

The secondary analysis approach did not seem to offer anything new; rather simply using methodology that would normally be used in an observational study but no data was provided to assess the effectiveness of this approach.

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