Reviewer's report

Title: Patient navigators for people with chronic disease: protocol for a systematic review and meta-analysis.

Version: 1 Date: 17 December 2014

Reviewer: Evan Mayo-Wilson

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I notice that the authors distinguish navigators from peer support. They may wish to consider how they'll handle patients trained to be navigators; the assumption that peer support is informal/unpaid is not always correct.

How will studies with different comparators be grouped for analysis?

The outcomes are not clear, and there are quite a lot. Would outcomes for different diseases be grouped together for analysis or handled separately?

- would MI and diabetes complications appear in the same analysis, for example? Which outcomes will be extracted when a study reports several measures of the same domain (e.g., morbidities associated with diabetes)?

Death is listed twice (and is not a morbidity). The same problem applies to the secondary outcomes - would the authors really group hospitalization and specialist visits?

The synthesis plans are also vague and leave a lot to be decided based on the data. It's difficult to offer more substantive comments in this section given the lack of detail about selecting/grouping/handling the outcomes. I assume the authors mean to use SMDs rather than MDs when there are multiple measures, but perhaps they would put different measures in different analyses? The use of meta-regression with (few?) studies of such variable conditions, outcomes, study designs, etc. seems farfetched, and the proposed methods are not well described.

I don't see the search strategies attached to the manuscript, and these should be included.