Reviewer’s report

Title: Conclusions in systematic reviews of mammography for breast cancer screening and associations with review design and author characteristics

Version: 0 Date: 17 Nov 2016

Reviewer: Eric Apaydin

Reviewer’s report:

This is a very interesting paper!

However, I have a few concerns about the data analysis and the conclusions drawn from it:

1) Tables 1 and 1A: These tables should be merged or at least both in the main body of the text. Further, please list chi-squared tests for favorable conclusions and design/author characteristics for women of all ages as well as women 49 and younger and 70 and older. It would be helpful to the reader to list all of these analyses instead of simply those for women 50-69.

2) Figure 1: This figure is very hard to understand. I think it is about bucketing age groups in the articles you abstracted into the age groups used in your article. Please label the axes more clearly and make the Tetris-like shapes more understandable to the reader (what are the unlabeled blocks for?). Also, this figure is better suited the appendix. It details data management instead of results.

3) Figure 2: Please more clearly label the boxes in this figure so that it looks more like the PRISMA flow diagram: http://www.prisma-statement.org/PRISMAStatement/FlowDiagram.aspx

4) Discussion/Conclusions: The relationship between favorable conclusions and design/author characteristics for women in all age groups and subgroups should be discussed. If author type and competing interests are not significantly related to conclusion favorability overall, then your conclusions are overly broad.

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

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.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

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.