Reviewer’s report

Title: Customized Registry Tool for Tracking Adherence to Clinical Guidelines for Head and Neck Cancers: Protocol for a Pilot Study

Version: 1 Date: 03 Oct 2019

Reviewer: Andrew Kenneth Husband

Reviewer's report:

hanks for the opportunity to review this paper, please consider the following, there is a mix of main points and pedantry in this:

Background

Line 71 I would argue these reports should be referenced, this is a US report, which I am aware of because of the field I work in. I don't this would apply to all readers, particularly those from an international audience.

Line 79 'high risk' should be hyphenated. I won't repeat this but it does occur throughout.

Line 98 review syntax, 'updating needed monitoring....' this doesn't make sense to me. Possibly reword to 'updating necessary (recommended?) monitoring'.

Line 99 you talk about the frequency of errors of omission but haven't included any data from the literature to help the reader frame the magnitude of this particular type of error. I would argue this would add to your arguments.

Line 116 should read 'diagnoses' given the plural that follows in 'plans'

Line 121, what is a 'safety net hospital'? I am not familiar with that term, it is certainly not something used in the UK.

Methods

The reference to measurement of the effect of the tool in line 131 and the comments in the reply to the initial review under point 2 around the primary aim. This appears to be suggesting that you will look to measure the effect of the tool in improving adherence to guidelines. You also suggest that the adherence to guidelines is a complex thing and is confounded by other issues beyond simple awareness and adherence to guidelines. I don't believe the outcomes have been properly addressed. If this is a pilot study then it should have pilot study outcomes and I'm not sure this is clear. Essentially what are you piloting? On line 215 you mention an effect estimate but this is the first reference I can see to an estimate in the paper and in the repose. I would agree an estimate is possible. That said there is then a discussion of a power calculation in line 220.

Why undertake a pilot study and include 300 patients? This really doesn't make sense, what are you piloting that requires that sample size? In terms of a substantive study, what would change in terms of sample between the pilot and eventual trial?

Line 152 insert a comma after 'database'

Line 189 insert a comma after 'cancer'

Line 190 sentence starting 'Outcomes...' syntax is poor, sentence is very repetitive and should be reviewed.
Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:
An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:
Needs some language corrections before being published

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.

None

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

Were you mentored through this peer review?
No