Reviewer’s report

Title: Systematic reviews of prognosis studies: a critical appraisal of five core clinical journals.

Version: 1 Date: 03 Nov 2016

Reviewer: Christiana Naaktgeboren

Reviewer's report:

The authors have significantly improved the manuscript and it is now much easier to follow. In particular, the intro, discussion, tables have been greatly improved. I have a few minor suggestions.

BACKGROUND

Ln. 13. Systematic reviews of prognosis studies -> should be "of" or "on"

Ln 12. Suggest rewording the aim as follows: "The purpose of this study was to assess the quality of SRs of prognostic studies published over the last decade in five high-impact journals"

METHODS

Ln. 17 summarizing -> summarized

Literature search -> The details of the search could be put in an appendix.

Quality assessment -> Ln. 18. Consider rewording as "checklists as a proxy for the quality" because you reporting guidelines and quality assessment tools are related, but different things.

DISCUSSION

Pg. 7, Ln 20. I am not a search expert, but I've heard that the label "review" in Medline is quite different that "systematic review", which I think is the statistic that you want. I don't know if it was a problem that you used the filter "review" instead of "systematic review" in your search strategy. If anything, my guess is that it would have resulted in a more sensitive, but less specific search. This might explain why you found so many titles and abstracts.

Pg. 8, Ln 5. It would be nice if you could elaborate a little more on assessing confounding. Maybe a conclusion could be that risk of bias tools should pay careful attention to confounding, as this is something that is difficult to assess?
This sentence makes it sound like you assessed all 4 types of prognostic studies. Can you reword it so that you say that you didn't look into the differences in types 1 and 2?

Limitations paragraph could be shortened a bit. Lns 15-21 aren't essential.

DATA SHARING
I don't know what the journal's policy on data sharing is. You have collected a nice dataset and you could add a sentence saying that you would be willing to share (portions of) it, if that is the case.

TABLES
While the tables are quite full, I find them much more informative. The only suggestion that I have is that it would be nice to add breaks for the subcategories for the reporting guidelines, if these tools have them (I don't remember).

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