Reviewer’s report

Title: The increasing need for systematic reviews of prognosis studies: strategies to facilitate review production and improve quality of primary research

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Reviewer: Mithat Gonen

Reviewer’s report:

This is a commentary highlighting a growing need for systematic reviews of prognosis studies. I have no disagreement with the message that there is a growing need. The commentary also aims to discuss strategies to facilitate review production. I think this aim is not as well served. My fundamental critique of the reviewed facilitators are that they are all Cochrane tools. It is possible that no such tools exist and if this is what the authors think they should probably state so and also call for development of similar facilitators outside Cochrane. If there are other tools they should be included in the commentary as well.

One consequence of the Cochrane-centric style is that the manuscript oscillates between scholarly work and an advertisement for Cochrane's added capabilities and interest for prognostic reviews. Half of the abstract and about one-third of the article is focused on Cochrane. While Cochrane may be the best umbrella we have for systematic reviews, it is not the only source of high-quality reviews. Hence a more balanced style of presentation is likely to benefit a larger number of reviewers.

Beyond this main critique I have some minor points to make:

1) The four different types repeated mentioned in the manuscript (overall prognosis, prognostic factors, prognostic models and predictors of treatment effect) is not a classification I have seen beyond the papers cited (and looks like mostly co-authored by members of Cochrane Netherlands). if it is a widely accepted grouping please cite some other articles that refer to it beyond Cochrane authors. I am partly puzzled because I do not understand why we do not have a separate category of models of predictive effect.

2) The authors cite numbers from PubMed (72500 in 2000 and 200000 in 2017) to back their assertion that this kind of research is on the rise. My observations agree with their assertion but this way of defending seems to ignore the fact that all literature is exploding and these numbers are conflating the "general growth in science" with "specific growth in prognostic modeling". I realize it is a commonly used tool but I also think for the empirical research community that this journal represents it is an important distinction.

3) Manuscript arrived without page numbers but what I could as the third page om top line ther eis a reference to "all review types" and I do not know what a review type is.
4) Same paragraph halfway through (~line 13) "predictive performance" do you mean prognostic performance?

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