

Reviewer's report

Title: Acceptance and perceived barriers of implementing a guideline for managing low back in General Practice

Version: 2 **Date:** 4 December 2007

Reviewer: Carsten Oliver CO Schmidt

Reviewer's report:

General

The Authors have responded satisfactorily to most issues raised - The article is more clearly now. Despite its methodological weaknesses I find this paper interesting because there is a lack of related research and related data in Germany. However, not all issues were addressed sufficiently well. Therefore I cannot recommend the publication of the article in its present form and must ask for some improvements as detailed below.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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While the authors state some problems with regard to the representativity of their sample they "assume" that the sample is representative without giving any explanation. This is plain guessing if they mean anything more than basic sociodemographic variables. If they mean sociodemographic variables, than they should be explicit on this (and discuss other sources of bias not only state them), and if they mean more: Either they have a very good! explanation on why they assume that 90% nonresponse has no bias while knowing that some factors might (likely) have led to systematic selection effects or they must discuss the implications of possible selection bias. The latter is of interest in itself: It may seem reasonable that adherence to guidelines may be even be more problematic in the entire population compared to the sample.

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Now that I know more about the qualitative part of their study – it seems to me a "minor add on" and methodologically quite weak. They must comment on the shortcomings of this approach in the discussion section "strenths and limitations". In general, this section is still superficial – also with regard to comments raised by the other reviewer.

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Please move the sentence “We conducted eight QCs, four in each region. The number of participants ranged from 7 to 14.” to the methods section.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.