

## **Reviewer's report**

**Title:** The diagnostic work up of growth failure in secondary health care; An evaluation of consensus guidelines.

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 23 December 2007

**Reviewer:** Barbara Starfield

### **Reviewer's report:**

The subject of this paper (Evaluation of consensus guidelines for diagnostic workup) would be of interest to readers. However, the entire issue of adequacy of referral needs to be deleted because the data set has no information on children who were not referred. The major changes needed are in the Abstract, as follows:

1. Delete the first clause in the second sentence of 'Background'
2. Re-word the last sentence of Methods as follows:.....to determine the characteristics of children who are incorrectly referred and the adequacy of workup of those who are referred.
3. The first sentence of Results needs to be changed to : 24 percent of children older than 3 years were inappropriately referred.
4. Replace first sentence of Conclusions with "Existing guidelines for workup of children with suspected growth failure are poorly implemented.

Please explain why more workups should be done. The yield (5%) in this study was just about what would be expected. Why should more tests be done? What would a better guideline look like and what is the likelihood that it would detect more true positives versus more false positives?

**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.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.