

In Response

Dear Laxmaiah Manchikanti,

Re: Request for withdrawal of publication of Rapid Recommendations by Busse et al of Commonly Used Interventional Procedures for Non-Cancer Chronic Spine Pain: A Clinical Practice Guidelines

Thank you for your letter of 16 April 2025 concerning the following publications in The BMJ:

- Busse J W, Genevay S, Agarwal A, Standaert C J, Carneiro K, Friedrich J et al. Commonly used interventional procedures for non-cancer chronic spine pain: a clinical practice guideline. BMJ 2025; 388 :e079970 doi:10.1136/bmj-2024-079970
- Wang X, Martin G, Sadeghirad B, Chang Y, Florez I D, Couban R J et al. Common interventional procedures for chronic non-cancer spine pain: a systematic review and network meta-analysis of randomised trials BMJ 2025; 388 :e079971 doi:10.1136/bmj-2024-079971

We have investigated this wide-ranging complaint and call for “withdrawal” of the two articles above. The most specific element was a complaint about the use of a “rapid review process”.

This concern, and your opinion whether this topic is suitable for rapid methods, is not relevant because neither rapid systematic review, nor the guideline used rapid review methodology. This is a traditional and full systematic review and a standard guideline. The word “rapid” in the series title refers to an aim of the series in the BMJ to make the translation of evidence more rapid.

A second element of your complaint makes general reference to an online discussion about the work. In our opinion, the authors have engaged in this discussion in a respectful and fulsome manner, and we do not consider that any action is needed.

Our impression is that the main concern with the recommendation made by the panel is that members of your organisation might have made a different recommendation based on the same information, and or that other organisations have made a different recommendation. This is a reasonable comment for you to post to add to the discussion of their work. However, it is not a reason for retraction.

No post-publication changes will be made to the content.

Best regards,

Dr Helen Macdonald

Publication Ethics and Content Integrity Editor

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