Reviewer's report

Title: Multicultural appearances of depression - a challenge for the general practitioner: a qualitative interview study

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Reviewer: Knut Holtedahl

Reviewer's report:

Discretionary revisions
This is an interesting study about difficulties experienced by patients and doctors in general practice when the cultural background differs. The study is limited to observations by the GPs, not the patients, and it would have been interesting to see the results of another study with GP patients. Perhaps the authors have considered this already? Focus group is a relatively simple method which may produce an amazingly rich materials, and the categories and themes found in the text by the researchers are well formulated and seem to make sense. Ethnographers spend months and years in order to understand one culture other than her own, the challenge for GP in a multi-cultural setting could at least be to be aware of her own cultural setting. However, ethnographers are warned against "going bush". Should one of the tasks of the GP be to guide the patient as to aspects of her own culture, at the same time as being respectful of the patient’s culture?

The discussion on diagnostic categories are interesting, the whole concept of diagnosis as a universal phenomenon seems to deserve a brief discussion.

The approach is said to be content analysis. The nomenclature within qualitative studies is not always consistent. If we consider Miller & Crabtree’s first chapter in "Doing qualitative research" from 1992, this would apply to more quasi-statistical approaches while what the authors describe are called "Editing analysis style". It is not clear if the 14 GPs participated twice or were divided into two or three groups with one group session each.

On p 12, "requirement" should be "request", I think

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