Reviewer’s report

Title: Early diagnostic impression has good predictive ability in primary care patients with chest pain

Version: 2 Date: 24 July 2009

Reviewer: Ana Ruigomez

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
The paper deals with an interesting issue which is to know if initial diagnosis made by the general practitioner is confirmed after a follow up period.
The question is that authors study an initial first minutes impression or guess more than a diagnosis.
There is a need for a justification of the study. Why they study the first glance diagnosis just based in the first few minutes of consultation? Why not considering clinical symptoms, presentation and information provide by the patient during consultation, that could be useful to establish an early diagnosis? Why not considered basic physical examination?
What is the extra value of “a first glance diagnosis” that could be seen as a suspicion or just a guess versus a diagnosis based on the impression after the encounter /consultation has finalised (taking into account the symptoms, and history given by the patient)?

Methods. Need to be re-written.
Exposure: Initial suspicion of diagnosis before history taking. Is this a just a guess? Not clear definition and how it is measure.
How are they sure they measure or capture this first impression and not the impression after consultation considering rest of the facts? Did the GP stopped their consultation at a certain timing and filled a questionnaire and then continue with the consultation? How was the procedure to ascertain the initial suspicion of diagnosis?
Not enough details are provided to understand how they collected information from the GP.
I read in a previous publication from authors ( BMC Fam Practice, 2007, 8:51 ), that GPs had to filled a specific questionnaire, but it is not mentioned or describe in the present manuscript. Also a description of information about diagnosis at follow up it also lacking. Do they use the same method (questionnaire) to assess 3 month and 1 year diagnosis? Was the same questionnaire? Or used medical record extraction?
Not clear the number of patients that were used for final analysis. “Initial diagnosis impression was recorded in 70.4% of patients and confirmed in 319
patients at one year”. This is hard to understand. What happened with the rest? Missing information? Were they excluded from the analysis?

Statistical analysis.

Unsure about statistical methods used.

They do not describe how they construct the logistic model, unique or different models? Which variables of adjustment were included?

Minor Essential Revisions

Table 1 (SE ) means standard error? Why in %?

**Level of interest:** An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests