Reviewer's report

Title: Patient perception of physicians' knowledge for hypertensive patients did not differ between clinics and hospitals: a cross-sectional study in Japan

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Reviewer: Peter Wilhelmus de Leeuw

Reviewer's report:

This study examines patients’ perception of physicians’ knowledge in Japan. There appears no major difference between clinics and hospitals in this regard. It is an interesting study although the results are not too surprising. I have the following comments:

- The introduction is rather long and could be shortened considerably without loss of information. However, the research question or hypothesis has not been formulated very well. As an outsider I would not know why there would be a possible difference between clinics and hospitals in the first place.

- Taking only hypertension as a common chronic condition is a bit troublesome. Part of the present results may have arisen by chance. Why not including another common problem such as COPD?

- Japan is a big country and there are many major cities with pharmacies. How was this group of only 13 pharmacies selected and can the authors sufficiently rule out selection bias?

- The statement on sample size calculation on page 6 is too vague. The authors refer to a paper in Japanese that will not be easy to understand by non-Japanese researchers. This definitely needs some elaboration.

- Page 7: was the decision to dichotomize the data prespecified?

- Page 8: although about 800 patients had to be included according to the statistical paragraph, 736 subjects participated of whom only 687 had complete data. What does this mean in terms of power?

- There were differences in the severity of hypertension between the clinic and the hospital patients. It is not clear to me how this was taken into account in the multivariate analysis. But even when this analysis was appropriate, there remains the possibility that this difference could have influenced physicians’ behavior and recollection of certain items.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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.