Reviewer’s report

Title: A Qualitative study of attitudes to hypertension treatment among patients with and without diabetes.

Version: 1 Date: 23 October 2011

Reviewer: Yadlapalli Kusuma

Reviewer’s report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
The study is to understand beliefs, attitudes and coping mechanisms of patients with hypertension among diabetic and non-diabetic patients. However, it missed a solid hypothesis or research questions. Also, it failed to show how beliefs/attitudes of patients influence the treatment behavior and coping mechanism of the patients.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
The selected method i.e., FGDs is appropriate, and the authors described the way they have selected the sample for FGDs.

3. Are the data sound?
It is difficult to comment on this as I am not sure about the data saturation. Authors conducted one focus group each for the set criterion of selection/grouping, which may not be sufficient.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
The paper is based on qualitative data collected through focus group discussions. Authors could present the data analysis process very clearly. Authors followed the standard of reporting data collection and reporting of qualitative data.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
The discussion and conclusions need to be supported by the data. Results should be more structured. The Results part needs reworking and it is to be rewritten.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
The authors stated only few limitations. The methodological limitations need to be acknowledged. Authors should talk about limitation in terms of collecting data merely based on focus groups (rather using both quantitative and qualitative/battery of qualitative methods). Also, authors need to speak about data saturation, which is important in qualitative research.
7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
Yes

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
Title needs modification. The terms - perceptions and management of hypertension may be included in the title rather than attitudes.

9. Is the writing acceptable?
Acceptable.

Additional Comments:
The present study is carried out to gain an understanding of beliefs, attitudes and coping mechanisms among hypertension patients with and without diabetes. The participants were randomly selected from hypertension registry available, to include in the focus groups. Ten focus groups discussions were held. At the outset the authors have conducted one focus discussion for the set criteria to maintain homogeneity of the group based on age group, gender and diabetic status. It is expected to conduct more focus group discussions in each category till the data saturation is attained. Generally the numbers not pre-decided, but continued till the saturation is attained. Hence, the authors should address this issue during revision. Also, the limitations of the study should also be mentioned in the revised manuscript. (Major compulsory revisions)

The authors need to relook at the data to provide more support to the inferences drawn. At present, the results are discussed; and it appears that the discussion is influenced by researchers own views and interpretations than based on the study results. Also, this is one of the risks in reporting qualitative research. Hence, a thorough relooking into the data is required to present the results to support the inferences/conclusions drawn. Whatever has been concluded needs evidence from the results. Authors need to take care to present the results with quotes supporting the inferences drawn. (Major compulsory revisions)

**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.