Reviewer's report

Title: Lack of adherence to hypertension treatment guidelines among GP's in southern Sweden - a case report based survey

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Reviewer: Peter Nilsson

Reviewer's report:

This was an observational study on the clinical practice among Swedish GPs in relation to five written case reports of patients at varying cardiovascular risk. The idea was to test the accuracy of clinical judgement on risk factors and total cardiovascular risk in relation to international guidelines from 2003.

I have the following questions and comments to the authors:

1. Major: The international guidelines presented in the manuscript (ESH/ESC Guidelines for treatment of hypertension, J Hypertens 2003; and the SCORE system for evaluation of cardiovascular risk, Eur Heart J 2003) where not automatically applied in Sweden when they first become published as it was not until mid-2006 that the SCORE system was officially introduced in domestic guidelines from the Swedish Medical Product Agency ("Läkemedelsverket"). Therefore, one might question if these international recommendations were fully acknowledged by Swedish GPs at the time of the survey. This should be more discussed and a comment provided in the text. There might even exist some GPs with rather negative attitudes towards screening and cardiovascular risk factor control in healthy subjects.

2. Major: No statistical analyses have been carried out by the authors why the results are purely descriptive, and therefore it is hard to evaluate to what extent there might exist over- or undertreatment, based on judgement on written case histories. However, based on a similar design with clinical case studies, it has previously been possible to apply statistical analyses of results - see reference: "Backlund L, Danielsson B, Bring J, Strender LE. Factors influencing GPs' decisions on the treatment of hypercholesterolaemic patients. Scand J Prim Health Care. 2000 Jun;18(2):87-93". If the authors do not want to apply statistics at all they have to provide good arguments not to do so.

3. Minor: (a) In Results for Case 1 there is a sentence that was duplicated on which BP target was set. A BMI of 25 kg/m2 is not obesity (per definition) as mentioned in Results of Case 1. (b) In Risk Assessment for Case 2 there is mentioning of NIDDM, a term that is not in use any longer. The correct term is "type 2 diabetes". (c) Diabetes should also be mentioned among major cardiovascular risk factors in the Introduction (first page).

4. The manuscript needs language revision as there are some mispellings and grammatical errors.
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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.