Reviewer’s report

Title: Weight related health status of patients treated by dieticians in primary care practice: first results of a cohort study.

Version: 1 Date: 16 September 2013

Reviewer: Mark Harris

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting descriptive study of baseline data on a cohort of patients seen by dieticians for weight management in the Netherlands.

Major Compulsory Revisions

In the methods it is unclear how participating dieticians chose their ten patients. What proportion of eligible patients in the dieticians’ practices was recruited? Were all 3000 baseline questionnaires mailed to patients or were some not used? Did all 154 dieticians recruit 10 patients? How representative was the sample in comparison with all patients seen by dieticians or patients in primary medical care? This has important implications for the inferences that can be drawn from this and the generalizability of the findings.

More detail is needed on the methods of analysis in the methods section. A large number of univariate statistical tests were performed using Chi square. How did the authors adjust for multiple testing (ie multiple testing increases the probability that a positive association will be found)? Tables 3 and 4 would lend itself to multivariable analysis (eg using log regression to contrast those at different levels of risk). Why did the authors not use multivariable analysis? How did the authors adjust for clustering of the data by dietician or practice (and what were the intraclass correlation coefficients, ICC)?

The discussion states that the sample is representative of patients visiting dieticians in primary care. Reference is made to a previous survey and national survey but not detailed information is given about this – other than the fact that the majority have weight related problems. Reference 4 is not available to the reviewer and presumably not to most readers. More description is needed of the methodology of these studies and a table provided to compare the characteristics of participants in this study with those previous studies. The discussion and conclusion do not really clearly discuss the implications of the findings especially those in Tables 3 and 4.

Minor Essential Revisions

Abstract: levels of weight related risk are described but not defined.

Minor grammatical errors.

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

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

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests