Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 2  Date: 2 March 2014

Reviewer: Mark Harris

Reviewer’s report:

The authors have responded to the points in my previous review. The inclusion of Table 1 clarifies how representative the sample was and there is now more discussion of the implications. However there are two areas were I disagree with the response.

Major compulsory revisions:

1. It appears that the authors did not specify how the dieticians were to select their patients (for example randomly, or in order over a specified time period. The authors have acknowledged that they left it up to the dieticians how many to include and that they did not know who had not been included. However it should be more specifically acknowledged that selection of patients was not random or systematic. Furthermore there it is not possible to estimate response rate other than the fact that half of those questionnaires distributed were returned.

2. The authors have decided not to do multivariate analysis or to adjust for clustering of the data. The authors are correct in saying that descriptive information on a baseline sample would not require adjustment (Tables 2 and 3). However they have done multiple univariate comparisons within the sample in Tables 4 and 5 comparing the characteristics of patients at different degrees of weight related health risk. Surely these could have been reproduced using multivariate methods adjusting for age and other factors. For example surely the number of previous weight loss attempts is related to age as well as to level of risk. Similarly clustering of patients in practices may have influenced the association between ethnicity and risk?

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.