Reviewer's report

Title: General practitioner attitudes to the care of people with epilepsy: an examination of clustering within practices and prediction of patient-rated quality of care.

Version: 2 Date: 17 November 2004

Reviewer: William O Tatum IV

Reviewer's report:

General
1. The authors have addressed most of the points raised upon initial review. In their response, a three-category measure of seizure frequency is reported to have been used. I can find no mention of this in the methods section of the manuscript. I would suggest that the response to the initial review be incorporated in the text (ie 54% of patients with no seizures in the previous year). While it is now cited as a limitation of the study relative to those controlled vs uncontrolled, expanding this issue to further discuss the results of seizure frequency as a significant predictor of patient-rated quality of GP care may best be further elucidated in the text (Discussion) as they have done in the response to the initial review.
2. Acknowledge the importance of medical and surgical therapy as crucial in the conclusions section in the 3rd line of the conclusion. I think it is worrisome that in the last paragraph of the results section that "at the practice level, seizure frequency in patients was not associated with GP attitudes". I am sure the authors do not mean that GPs don't care how many seizures an epilepsy patient has...?

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
1. The methods section is difficult to read. The 1st paragraph is confusing. The initial statement includes "A study to assess the effectiveness of an epilepsy prompt and reminder card). This sounds like verbage used for a different study and differs from the goals described in the title of the paper and introduction. The abstract contains demographic data (now appearing in the 1st paragraph of the results section) that should be moved to the methods section. Apparently an 11 question survey was used but this is not elucidated in the methods section, nor is the "prompt and reminder card" explained as to exactly how the information is transmitted. I assume that the card is available for patients and that attitudes of physicians are surveyed in a separate fashion though more detail would help clarify this section for the reader.
2. The statistics section is still too long. This is a useful open-label survey study that seems burdened by more statistics than data. Chi-square analysis and p-values referenced in the text/tables do not appear in the statistics/methods section. The second paragraph of the results section is largely a statistics/method paragraph and should be condensed.
3. Spell out numbers that begin sentences and number the pages.
4. Table 1 should have an asterix before the initial p-value of p<0.05.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.