Reviewer's report

Title: Barriers to Obesity Management: A Pilot Study of Primary Care Clinicians

Version: 1 Date: 30 April 2006

Reviewer: Gayle M Timmerman

Reviewer's report:

General
This study examines barriers to obesity management in the VA setting. The topic is important since the search for practical strategies for addressing the obesity epidemic continues. The authors' focus on the VA setting which has unique system characteristics that would likely influence barriers to obesity treatment. The article is written clearly and flows well.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
The authors' chose to reduce the Likert-type scale data into dichotomous data for ease of interpretation. A lot of data is lost using this method of reporting data. Additionally, there is not clear evidence for the choices used as the cut-off point between variables. For example, the authors' grouped always as one variable and sometimes/rarely and never as the other variable. Others may argue that always and sometimes would conceptually fit together better. I would suggest that the authors' report the frequency (%) for each Likert-type response on the tables and then could report the results using reduced, dichotomous level data in the results section. By including the all of the frequencies on the tables, readers will be able to draw their own conclusions regarding the data.

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. Under the specific aims of the study replace the terms "determine rates" with "describe."
2. Report the number of participants in each focus group.
3. In the survey section, refer readers to the appropriate data tables to specifically see what questions were on the surveys.
4. For the face validity testing, indicate how many reviewed the content and if any changes were made based on their feedback. Also, did the review by this group address content validity as well?
5. In the participant's section, indicate how many were eligible for the study.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

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