Reviewer’s report

Title: Prognostic value of physicians assessment of compliance and other factors regarding all-cause mortality in patients with type 2 diabetes: primary care follow-up study

Version: Date: 20 April 2006

Reviewer: Marcel Adriaanse

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Here by my comments on the revised paper by Rothenbacher et al entitled “Prognostic value of physicians’ assessment of compliance and other factors regarding all-cause mortality in patients with type 2 diabetes: primary care follow-up study”.

Dear Authors,

Again, with great interest I read this article. The authors have answered the points sufficiently, which significantly improved the paper. Here by my comments.

p = page, l = line

Frontpage
1. Title, p 1; The authors changed their title into: “Prognostic value of physicians’™ assessment of compliance and other factors regarding all-cause mortality in patients with type 2 diabetes: primary care follow-up study”. I must admit that I have some difficulties with the words “and other factors”, because this can be almost anything, for example biological, psychological, social, environmental, medical etc. I would suggest skipping these 3 words out of the title. The focus of this paper is on compliance in relation with all-cause mortality.

Abstract
2. p 2. The authors used the term “living status” (dead/alive at follow) throughout the paper. But isn’t the usual term not “mortality”? As used several times in this paper. If so than the authors should use the term mortality throughout the paper.
3. p 2. In the method section of the abstract the authors write that “In addition, we carried out a survey among physicians by means of a questionnaire to find out which aspects for the assessment of patient compliance were of importance to make this assessment.” As a consequence the authors should try to impute in the results section of their abstract, the (lets say) 2 most important aspects.
4. p 2. The second sentence of the results section (Amongâ€¦ mortality) is difficult to interpreted. The authors mentioned â€œother factors such as age, gender and a history of macrovascular or microvascular diseaseâ€; which is not clear or even incorrect. I think they should mention the significant factors of table 4. These are patient type (patients at office vs nursing home/visited patients), gender, age and macrovascular complications. And perhaps they should impute the Odds ratio, showing that patient type (OR=3.91), gender (Female OR=0.34), age (>80 years OR=20.46), and having macrovascular complications (OR=3.17) are also independently associated with all-cause mortality. Three of these factors do have a higher (!) OR than patients™ compliance.

Results
5. p 9, para 2, line 14/5. The authors write â€œNone of the latter variables met the criteria for inclusion in the modelâ€ . Is it â€œnone of the 2, 3, or 4 variables? Please help the reader.
6. p 9, last paragraph. Still I do not think that Table 5 does not add much surplus value. It is in my opinion sufficient mentioning the 2 most and 2 less important aspects. Full detail of the questions is now provided. Please skip table 5.

Tables
7. Perhaps my comments about the percentages (%) were not clear. I will try it again. On top of table 1, 2 and 3 the authors define in the column the percentages, presented with the symbol %. This means that putting percentages beside each variable is double information. Because this is already defined on top of the column. Please skip these percentages (%) in table 1, 2 and 3.
References
8. I appreciate that the authors updated there references. And perhaps sufficient. On the other hand, the average publication date of the first 20 references is around 1997. A lot happened the last 5 to 10 years. So, please (I beg you) try to find useful and updated references.

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'