Reviewer's report

Title: Why do primary care patients with dyspepsia tend to deny upper gastrointestinal endoscopy in Greece? Experiences gained from a qualitative study on rural Greece

Version: 1 Date: 19 August 2010

Reviewer: Aanand Naik

Reviewer's report:

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

1. The authors should better describe of The Theory of Planned Behavior, which is the driving conceptual model for the survey questions. This is especially true because I suspect the readership of BMC Gastroenterology will not be familiar with behavioral models like TPB. I would suggest one of two approaches, a) a figure demonstrating each of the conceptual elements of the theory with a short definition of each construct or b) a sentence definition in the text that describes each of the core elements.

2. The authors need to better clarify the qualitative methodology. I don’t believe this was really grounded theory because the surveys do not appear to have been conducted as in-depth interviews and the analysis did not use the constant comparative method. It does seem more appropriate to call this content analysis since the qualitative data seems to be drawn from interviews that were more consistent with free-responses to open-ended surveys. Furthermore the conceptual categories seem to be constructed using thematic analysis of responses using the a priori categories within the TPB. In the end the analysis performed seems to be structured, reproducible, and did result in novel, conceptually coherent data. But the authors need to better describe their methodology in a more consistent manner.

• 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. Second sentence of the second paragraph of the introduction, change “the doctor patient’s relationship” to “the doctor-patient relationship”.

2. The first sentence of the second paragraph of the Participants subsection of the methods should be rewritten as follows: “Patients were evaluated using a Greek translation of the validated questionnaire, Identification of Dyspepsia in General Population...”

3. The limitations section mentions something about “Affluent” population but there is no economic data in the results section about the participants or on table 1.

4. In Table 1, I would suggest changing the percentiles for the education and
location variable to reflect column % rather than row %.

5. Page 11, First sentence after the Normative Beliefs heading should read…”Patients’ beliefs regarding the necessity and importance of EGD for their health…”

6. First sentence of the discussion should read…”This qualitative study highlighted the main reasons why primary care patients did not comply with upper…”

7. Page 14, middle sentence of the first full sentence should read…”Nevertheless 18% of them questioned their GPs’ recommendations raising issues of trust within the doctor-patient relationship.”

8. The first sentence of the following paragraph (the one starting with “Patient’s education about the examination…”) is confusing and difficult to follow. I would suggest rewording for clarity.

9. An additional limitation should be included stating that the interviews only reflect the perceptions of patients who refused endoscopy and cannot be compared with the perceptions of patients who elected to undergo endoscopy.

• Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)

1. To improve clarity of the aims statement I suggest rewording the last sentence of intro to:…”the findings of a qualitative study that describes patients’ reasons for refusing to undergo an endoscopy…” I might then also suggest that the title also use the term refuse rather than deny.

2. It would be helpful to readers not familiar with the cultural differences across Greece to perhaps state in simple terms the cultural and socioeconomic differences of the study populations from Macedonia versus Crete. This can be done in the Setting section or as a figure legend to Figure 1.

3. An additional paragraph in the discussion section would be helpful. This paragraph could describe potential interventions to enhance patient acceptance of endoscopy. I would suggest again using examples from the colonoscopy literature as numerous interventions have been attempted to enhance compliance rates.

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: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests