Reviewer’s report

Title: Perspectives on gastroesophageal reflux disease in primary care: the REFLEX study of patient-physician agreement

Version: 1 Date: 20 September 2010

Reviewer: Maarten Hemmink

Reviewer’s report:

Dear authors,

This interesting and well-written study is performed with a large number of patients and with a large number of participating physicians. It regards the level of agreement between patients and physicians about the prescribed PPI therapy and shows that there is considerable difference between the patient’s and the physician’s view on the effect of the prescribed therapy. Please find the suggestions below.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Abstract section (conclusion): please rephrase the last sentence. According to the aim of the study agreement between patients and physicians should be the main outcome, this is not reflected by the conclusion.

2. As this is an industry-sponsored study it may be good to provide some data about the kind of prescribed PPI.

3. Methods: how was the data collected? Did the physician collect the patient’s questionnaires, or were they sent by mail?

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Methods/Results section: it is likely that the collected data about the expectations of patients and physicians, and their lever of agreement, is influenced by the fact that these data is collected after the start of the therapy.

2. If available, it should be interesting to add information about the patient’s health related quality of life.

3. Result section, residual symptoms and impact, 2nd paragraph: please remove the last sentence, as this does not add any useful information, or clarify in the discussion why this is important.

4. Discussion section: 3rd paragraph: the last 2 sentences are clear and are the main result of the study. The following sentences need some rephrasing: “patient-physician agreement … daytime heartburn” is this difference really interesting and significant? If so, differ kappa values significantly? In addition to
this: the next sentence “However … (good agreement).” does not seem to clarify the authors conclusion and could be removed.

Discretionary Revisions

1. Figure 2: x-axis: “Patient’s expectation of treatment” should be “patient’s and physician’s expectations”

2. Table 2: k-values: a suggestion to increase the readability of the table: kappa value expressed in 2 decimals instead of 3

3. Methods: please clarify why the use of OTM by patients is scored according to the physician, why not by the patient’s questionnaires?

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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