Reviewer's report

Title: Development of the Pediatric Quality of Life Inventory(TM) Eosinophilic Esophagitis Module items: qualitative methods

Version: 1 Date: 27 July 2012

Reviewer: Steffen Husby

Reviewer's report:

General comment:
Eosinophilic Esophagitis (EoE) has during the last decades been recognized as an emerging disease particularly, but not uniformly, in children and adolescents. The subject of Health related Quality of Life (HRQoL) in EoE has not been addressed previously, so the subject of the present paper is highly relevant. The paper describes the development of a quality patient-driven questionnaire for the assessment of the burden of EoE in children and adolescents. The framework stems from a generic trademarked questionnaire for chronic disease in general in pediatrics. The methodology is interesting: use of interviews to generate items and then use of cognitive interviews to modify/improve the items.

Major compulsory revisions:
1) Focus group interviews were seemingly performed in relation to a previous publication, but no clear reference is given. Should be given
2) The present study describes cognitive interviews in 17 children and 27 parents. A considerable proportion of the children had associated atopic disease, which may influence the interpretation. Please substantiate this remark.
3) As noted by the authors the population contains different backgrounds, which should be more thoroughly reported.

Minor essential revisions:
1) Material and Methods: explain the representativity of the patients with regard to age distribution and symptom severity compared to the total clinical material at the Clinical Center for EoE.
2) Tables: use of percentages without the actual numbers is confusing and should be corrected.

Discretionary Revisions:
1) A drawback is the use of biased questions like “I do not like going to the doctor”. Some questions are not completely clear: “I worry about eating food I’m allergic to or not supposed to eat”. Otherwise, the paper is generally well-written.
2) The interviews elucidated problems and concerns that had not been previously addressed, but they include a paucity of data. Inclusion of data from the following multicenter evaluation would be welcomed.
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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