Reviewer's report

Title: Clinicians’ management strategies for patients with symptoms from the upper gastrointestinal tract: a qualitative approach

Version: 1 Date: 8 March 2005

Reviewer: Johanna I Westbrook

Reviewer's report:

General
This paper is well written and reports the results of a very interesting study examining the variation in clinicians’ responses to a series of cases studies.

The results build on previous research demonstrating the considerable variation in clinicians’ treatment responses, and also illustrates the extent to which clinicians believe their colleagues behaviour is similar to their own. The study approach was well designed and the results were clearly described.

My only suggestions are around typographical errors and a few grammatical errors. (see below)

I would have no hesitation in recommending this paper for publication. I thought it was a very neat study and I thoroughly enjoyed reading it.

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

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

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Page 4, paragraph 2 line 5 the word 'interindividually' needs to be changed.

Page 12 paragraph 3 line 2. The authors state “the validity of the information yielded in the interviews in our study could be questioned” I don’t think validity is the correct word in this statement. I believe the authors mean that the clinicians failed to provide correct information to this question as they left out many of the other factors worthy of consideration.

Page 13 paragraph 1 line 3 I suggest the following change to the sentence “….irrespective of how much it [in fact] differs from that of …”

Page 13 paragraph 2 line 7 replace format with form
Line 9 change outmost to utmost
Line 10 this sentence does not make sense and needs to be reworded.
Paragraph 3 line 1 remove ‘the’ so that it reads ..”letting patients’ preferences..”

Page 14
Conclusions
Line 1 change add to adds
Line 1 reword ‘..that even in cases where there is consensus in the scientific literature on treatment,
variations in ..”
Paragraph 2 line 4 & 5 it should read “..together with cost-effectiveness as a priority”.
The last sentence of the conclusion needs to be re-worded as it is not clear.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential 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