Reviewer's report

Title: What matters most to people with multiple myeloma? A qualitative study of views on quality of life.

Version: 2 Date: 22 April 2014

Reviewer: Maura Dowling

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for asking me to review this paper. The study undertaken will be of great interest to clinicians, researchers, patients and carers, and will advance current understanding of quality of life issues for those living with a diagnosis of myeloma.

The paper is very well written with good use of headings. It was both an interesting and enjoyable read.

I have a few suggestions for the authors; I hope the suggestions will add further to the reporting of the study. I have outlined these below:

Discretionary Revisions

1. In the ‘Issues interview’ section, more detail regarding how long the interviews took (average time) would be useful.

2. I am curious as to why the POS was chosen as a comparator when it was not discussed in the 2012 systematic review of quality of life tools in the context of myeloma (Osbourne et al in Eur J Haematology)? While a brief explanation is given for choosing the POS, I am wondering if it was also chosen because of the relatively large percentage of patients in the relapsed/progressive disease phase. A brief expansion on this would provide clarification for readers.

3. In the discussion section ‘views on existing QOL questionnaires’, some very interesting issues are discussed. In particular, some participants’ preference for the EORTC tools over the POS (even though the former has more items). I wonder was that because the EORTC MY24 questions specifically on symptoms common with myeloma (which patients may have felt was more relevant to them)? A brief comment on this would be useful here.

- Minor Essential Revisions

4. In the ‘Questionnaire interview’ section, it is stated (line 197) that the questionnaires contained ‘a mixture of open questions, numerical and likert scales’. It is stated later that the POS only has one open question; this sentence should therefore be changed to indicate that only one open question was included.

5. Some brief clarification re EOTC MY24 is needed. It states in the ‘Questionnaire interviews’ section that the MY24 version was used. Some clarification is needed as to why it was decided to use this earlier version and not the revised MY20. Was it because of the findings from the issues interviews
which had commenced before the questionnaire interviews?

6. One minor editing issue to highlight: Methods, page 2, line 52, should read ‘focus group’ at the end of this line.

**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.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare I have not competing interests