Reviewer's report

Title: Suicidal intention, psychosocial factors and referral to further treatment - a one-year cross-sectional study of self-poisonings

Version: 1 Date: 6 December 2009

Reviewer: Ahmad Ghanizadeh

Reviewer's report:

This is a one-year, cross sectional, clinically based study on adults (more than 15 years) with self-poisoning referred to the health care services. Part of its results has been published before. This paper aimed to describe self-reported and physician reported intention for self-poisoning, psychiatric history and demographic characteristics of the referrals, and possible plans for the follow up of them after discharge. The authors excluded patients with other concurrent primary diagnoses, and accidental non self poisoning. The data was gathered by a registration form after face to face interview with the patients. The intentions of the patients were classified. Only one category was applied to each patient.

Frequency of substance use was near to 80% of the patients. Substance use related poisoning was more common in males than females. About 40% of patients had a current psychiatric treatment. More than two thirds of patients were discharged with a plan for follow-up. More than half of those with self poisoning had a positive history for suicidal attempt. They concluded that patients with substance use related poisoning more than the other groups are discharged without any plan for follow-up.

Method

What does assess the standardized registration form? Is its validity and reliability enough? What are the criteria for classifications? Considering that only one category was applied to each patient, what about its intra- and inter-raters reliabilities? Of course, it is a concern of the authors as they mentioned in the limitation section.

Some numbers in tables and text needs to be rechecked or clarified. For example: 33% of them had been hospitalized in psychiatry ward before. 42% among suicidal, 35% among appeals, and 19% among substance use related poisoning (42%+ 35%+19%= 96%). Some of the total percents in table 1 are more than 100 percent.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the
statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'.