Reviewer’s report

Title: Benzodiazepine Use and Misuse Among Patients in a Methadone Program

Version: 2 Date: 5 February 2011

Reviewer: Anthony Comerford

Reviewer’s report:

Benzodiazepine Use and Misuse Among Patients in a Methadone Program
1. There are no Major Compulsory Revisions
2. There is one Minor Essential Revision
3. All other revisions are at the authors discretion

The article rightly emphasizes the issue of methadone patients abusing benzodiazepines because of the significant risk of fatal overdose from the drug combination. The authors go right to the source in questioning methadone program participants confidentially to assess onset, prevalence, use patterns and the demographics of users. The straightforward statistical processes appropriately point to potential profiling for probability and the potential for intervening with co-occurring anxiety and other mental health problems as possibilities for further study. The data appear sound, are reported in a generally acceptable format and appropriate interpretation and detail are provided for in discussion. The authors point to the inability to draw any causal conclusions, the limitation of the population surveyed as well as the inability to accurately assess diagnoses in the study.

Minor Essential Revision
2. There is one sentence on page 5 that is inconsistent in suggesting that “these data will inform clinicians, researchers and policy makers about more feasible and effective ways to address this problem.” This does not appear to be an objective of the study and it clearly does not provide such advice.

With this exception, the discussion and conclusions are adequately supported by the findings. While the article references the larger body of work in this area, it does not point to a specific body of work that is ongoing and that this article contributes to. It does recommend further research based upon the findings. The title and abstract accurately describe the article and the writing is clear.

Respectfully submitted,

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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 that I have no competing interests'