Reviewer’s report

**Title:** The impact of medication side effects on adherence among patients with schizophrenia: results of a cross-sectional nationwide survey

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 17 November 2011

**Reviewer:** Giovanni Abbate-Daga

**Reviewer’s report:**

The manuscript about influence that side effects have on therapies adherence is clear and concise. Moreover, it is about a clinically relevant topic and so useful to clinicians.

The manuscript could be improved as follows:

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

1) All used instruments are self reported. The authors consider this as a limitation but I partially agree. In particular, in schizophrenia it is difficult to distinguish between quantification of side effects and their experience. However, I think the paper should state – both in title and discussion – patients’ perspective on this issue. In line with this, the article can be considered as important in pharmacotherapy, schizophrenia psychopathology, and therapeutic relationship. Currently, nevertheless the authors recognize the limitations of the considered method, the article is then focused on side effects in an objective perspective. Instead it could be discussed also a nocebo effect, highlighted by patient’s perspective.

2) It is useful to add to the statistical analysis the dicotomic variable atypical/typical antipsychotic drug. Indeed 28.3% of patients was on typical antipsychotic meds. In case of studying side effects this variable should be analysed, also including later to see how regression variables change.

3) The article should consider in the discussion also psychosocial data that predict independently compliance to treatment and the possible mixed effect of age, education ad working status on compliance and side effects.

4) Data on higher costs and treatment-seeking of people who show partial adherence are interesting. It can be useful to do some considerations on how manage patients with side effects.

**Discretionary Revisions**

5) It should be reported not only the consideration that patients can under report side effects because they could also overestimate them.

6) I do not agree with the fact that it is not expected that the lack of compliance cannot increase side effects. Sudden drug suspension and receiving again a full dose after interruption can increase side effects. This should be discussed.

Giovanni Abbate Daga
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