Reviewer’s report

Title: Depression Treatment Patterns Among Individuals with Osteoarthritis: A Cross Sectional Study

Version: 3 Date: 30 March 2013

Reviewer: Chi Chiu Mok

Reviewer’s report:

The authors have removed rheumatoid arthritis from their database and the revised manuscript focussed only on patients with degenerative arthritis. Yet, the prevalence of depression in OA patients compared with other diseases is not known as the study is a cross-sectional analysis on the depression treatment received by the OA patients who presented with depressive symptoms.

The findings that Africans, older patients and those with less anxiety were less likely to require anti-depressive treatment are purely observational. Despite a lengthy discussion, the authors failed to postulate the reasons for this observation, which does not have any clinical implication. In other words, the current data analysis is more like a hospital audit than original research.

It woud be more scientifically sound if the authors could demonstrate that those OA patients who require more intensive anti-depressant treatment are suffering from more serious depressive disorders (any tool to grade the severity? any markers for severity?) or a higher level of pain in their joints (self-rated; in VAS).

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.