Reviewer’s report

Title: Treatment patterns and clinical characteristics prior to initiating depot typical antipsychotics for nonadherent schizophrenia patients

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Reviewer: Girdhar Agarwal

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Review of article “Treatment patterns and clinical characteristics prior to initiating depot typical antipsychotics for nonadherent schizophrenia patients”

By Haya Ascher-Svanum, Xiaomei Peng, Douglas Faries, William Montgomery.

In the present study, authors assess treatment patterns and clinical characteristics that immediately precede (by 1 to 6 months) the initiation of depot typical antipsychotics in the treatment of patients who were recently nonadherent to their oral antipsychotic regimens. I have some specific comments:

1. As accepted by authors, the sample size (n = 39) is quite small for ‘depot initiator’ group.

2. The unequal sample sizes (n = 39) for ‘depot initiator’ and (n = 275) for ‘non-depot initiator’ group will create a bias in comparing the two groups. Actually the sample size for second group is more than seven times as compared to the first group. The bias may distort the study’s result or conclusion (superior conclusion) in favour of ‘depot initiator’ group.

3. The choice of data collection point closest to day 269 post initiations for ‘non-depot initiator’ seems to be arbitrary. A better choice will be the median value.

4. I am apprehensive that there might be the possibility of non-adherence among ‘depot initiator’ group as they were non-adherent for oral antipsychotic medication.

5. Table 1: non-depot initiator race classification (153 white, 102 black and 19 other) do not add to 275, the sample size for this group.

6. Table 1: What are different PANSS scores?

The above points should be cleared before the script could be considered for publication.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests