Reviewer's report

Title: High prevalence of lack of knowledge of symptoms of acute myocardial infarction in Pakistan and its contribution to delayed presentation to the hospital

Version: 2 Date: 1 June 2007

Reviewer: Julie J Zerwic

Reviewer's report:

General
The authors have made significant improvements to the manuscript including multiple changes to improve grammar and sentence structure. The description of the instruments used as well as definitions of terminology is appreciated.

The authors provide more detail about the method that was used to collect the data about patients' knowledge of symptoms. The authors state that it was an "arbitrary" decision to call patients as knowledgeable if they knew one of 4 symptoms (chest pain, palpitations, shortness of breath, or ghabrahat). However it seems like a patient who was only able to identify ghabrahat as a symptom should not be classified as knowledgeable. This decision continues to be confusing but has been listed as a limitation of the study. A similar argument could potentially be made for palpitations. Given that the vast majority of individuals were classified as not knowledgeable changing the number of those classified as knowledgeable probably does not change the conclusions that individuals have very little knowledge of cardiac symptoms.

The ability to have collected time of symptom onset from patients/family members of 100% of patients continues to be surprising given the difficulty in capturing this variable for all patients in other studies.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

P p
4 2 Time from ED arrival to use of thrombolytic therapy is discussed as it relates to the US. Is there any information regarding Pakistan?
5 2 The sentence that begins "We conducted an observational study to determine..." is confusing. Consider editing the sentence.
6 2 Consider revising the first sentence. The portion of the sentence "the concerned hospital was taken" is difficult to understand.
7 2 Define “couple of hours”
8 1 Unnecessary to utilize parenthetical descriptions unless the variables are different than what the reader would expect
9 2 Third sentence from the end of the paragraph ("A step wise method...") is a fragment.
12 2 Consider revising the sentence that begins "we found that at least a third..." In the same sentence, provide a number of hours instead of simply stating "significant delay to the hospital"
13 1 Change “form” to “from”
15-16 It is unnecessary to provide a numeric list of limitations. Consider revising the paragraph so it flows more easily.

Figures: The figures are not particularly helpful and could be summarized in text.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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.